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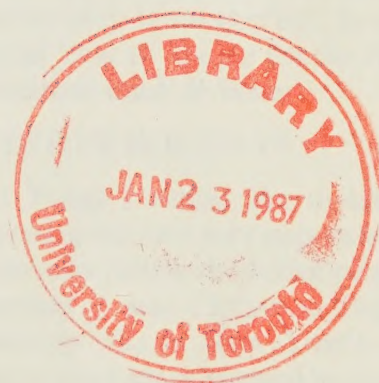
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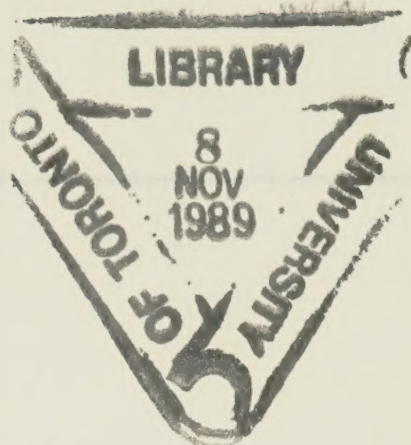
Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 33rd Parliament
Monday, January 12, 1987

Speaker: Honourable H. A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers





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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday, January 12, 1987

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers.

LEGISLATIVE PAGES

Mr. Speaker: Before we commence routine proceedings, I would like to ask all members to join me in welcoming the next group of legislative pages, which will be serving in this winter sitting of the second session of the 33rd Parliament. They are:

Michelle Basciano, Welland-Thorold; Nicola Di Croce, Downsview; Anne Donohoe, Wilson Heights; Sarah Epp, Waterloo North; D'Arcy Finley, London Centre; Adam Haugh, Rainy River; Erica Heasman, Sarnia; Helen Hopkins, Parry Sound; Sarah Jones, London South; Nicholas Lyne, Scarborough Centre; Allison Meldrum, Ottawa East; Hope Moore, St. Andrew-St. Patrick; Kim Murray, London North; Olson Or, Essex North; Renee Parsons, Parkdale; Rodel Ramos, Etobicoke; Michael Robb, Middlesex; Dawn Marie Schlegel, Perth; Robert Todd, Brant-Oxford-Norfolk; Harley Young, Fort William; Roxane Villeneuve, Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry; Robbie Walters, Niagara Falls, and Michael Waterston, Wellington South.

Please welcome this group of pages.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

FARM EQUIPMENT

Mr. J. M. Johnson: I would like to bring to the attention of this House a problem faced by the Ontario Retail Farm Equipment Dealers' Association, which represents 425 farm equipment sales and service organizations in Ontario. The corporation capital tax as it applies to farm equipment dealers appears to be unjust and discriminatory. The member for Durham West (Mr. Ashe) presented this as a question to the Minister of Revenue (Mr. Nixon) on October 23, 1986. The member for Durham-York (Mr. Stevenson) also questioned the minister on November 4, 1986.

It is my understanding that dealers are forced to pay tax on inventory which they legally do not own but which is in their possession for more than 120 days. Because of the seriously de-

pressed economic environment in the farming community, this corporation capital tax is just another burden faced by the business people in rural Ontario.

I respectfully request the Treasurer and Minister of Revenue to give serious consideration to modifying this unfair tax burden levied against the farm equipment dealers.

EMERGENCY HOUSING

Mr. Reville: The United Nations has designated 1987 as International Year of Shelter for the Homeless. The tragedy of homelessness is cruelly close to home. The housing crisis claimed its first acknowledged victim of 1987 yesterday, not 10 minutes' walk from the Legislature.

Brother Rudy Mumm, who works at the Good Shepherd Refuge, said on New Year's Day, "The situation continues to get worse and we are fearful that there will be more people dying in the streets this winter." I know how devastated Brother Mumm is today to find his words have so soon proved prophetic.

Brother Mumm and a growing number of housing activists and front-line workers have recognized the problem of homelessness for years and have raised the problem with ever-increasing sharpness.

Today we will be doing estimates of the Ministry of Housing, and I am afraid that within the Housing estimates there is no comfort for the homeless. As a percentage of gross expenditure, Ontario is shockingly ahead of only the maritime provinces in terms of its housing effort. Surely in this International Year of Shelter for the Homeless, the government must do better.

FESTIVE HOLIDAYS

Mr. Offer: Today I would like to take the opportunity to recognize two very important days for those people who follow the Julian calendar. For them, January 7 was Christmas Day and tomorrow, January 13, is New Year's Day. These two special days are celebrated by many of the ethnic communities which have chosen to make their homes in Ontario. They include people of Ukrainian, Russian, Serbian, Macedonian and Bulgarian origin and those who are members of Christian Orthodox churches.

These are holidays that are marked by reflection. This is a time for being with family members and close friends. No matter how far away family members may be in miles, in their hearts they feel closer together on these days. I would like to invite my colleagues in the Legislature to join me in congratulating all those communities that will be celebrating this festive occasion.

HIGHWAY CROSSING

Mr. Partington: I wish to express my disappointment with the recent decision made by the Ministry of Transportation and Communications. The ministry has denied a request from the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake for a safe crossing system on Highway 55 at Field Road in Virgil. This crosswalk was originally requested by the residents of Pleasant Manor Retirement Village in Virgil to assist them in crossing the highway for access to shopping and to their grocery store, post office and bank.

The administrator of Pleasant Manor, Ed Schellenberg, has witnessed numerous near misses as residents of the retirement manor have struggled to move quickly and judge the traffic flow to cross the highway safely. During the summer and fall months, Highway 55 is particularly busy with tourist traffic to Niagara-on-the-Lake and the Shaw Festival.

I take issue with the minister's suggestion that the mere presence of sidewalks and reduced speed limits in this area will put drivers on notice of pedestrian activity and that, as a result, motorists can be expected to temper their driving habits. I urge the minister to re-examine his decision and allow a pedestrian-activated traffic signal at Field Road to protect the safety of the residents of Pleasant Manor and everyone who wishes to do business in Virgil.

CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE

Mr. Morin-Strom: The Liberal proposal for new research centres leaves the north out in the cold. The excellence centres proposed by the government are going to areas that already have strong research bases. The north, with the greatest need and the greatest opportunity to create new jobs in Ontario, does not qualify.

On the last day of the fall session at Queen's Park, the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr. O'Neil) announced the criteria for up to six centres of excellence that would be the major thrust of the technology fund. The minister's proposal has some serious flaws.

The call for the proposals indicates that the research centres must be sponsored by a consortium of universities and the private sector. The centres will be selected on the basis of strength of the sponsor's current research programs, programs which must be internationally recognized. The provincial government has never built a major research university in northern Ontario, and the private sector has never developed a research base in the north. Unless there are adjustments to the eligibility criteria, this proposal will leave northern Ontario out in the cold.

These centres should be selected based on regional economic needs and on potential benefit from technological development. I am especially concerned about the discrimination against the north in this billion-dollar program. The north desperately needs research centres that can change our future from being hewers of wood and drawers of water for the industrial south. The north does have special needs and abilities.

If the Liberals wanted to help northern Ontario, they would establish research facilities there to help the resource-based industries and encourage secondary manufacturing.

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PROGRAMME D'ALPHABÉTISATION

M. Poirier: Pour plus d'un million d'Ontariennes et d'Ontariens adultes, l'analphabétisme constitue un obstacle important.

À l'été 1980, j'ai initié, à titre d'agent de développement pour l'Association canadienne-française de l'Ontario de Prescott-Russell, une première étude sur l'analphabétisme et ses conséquences. En réponse aux tristes conclusions faisant état d'un taux élevé d'analphabétisme au sein de notre communauté, M. Richard Hudon mit sur pied un efficace programme d'alphabétisation connu sous le nom d'Alpha-Action.

C'est avec beaucoup de fierté et de confiance en ses compétences que je tiens à souligner l'accession de M. Hudon au poste de coordonnateur provincial pour le secteur francophone du programme d'alphabétisation communautaire en Ontario.

J'entrevois avec beaucoup d'optimisme l'engagement de M. Hudon et celui de mon gouvernement dans la lutte contre l'analphabétisme par l'entremise d'un programme d'alphabétisation de beaucoup amplifié.

Je tiens à assurer M. Hudon de mon appui personnel des plus solidaires, ainsi que de celui de tous mes collègues, tant francophones qu'anglophones. Je suis fier de voir mon gouvernement

s'engager dans la lutte contre l'analphabétisme d'une façon si convaincante. Voilà une autre preuve de notre détermination à répondre à des besoins pressants dans notre communauté.

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY

Mr. Shymko: Today I will be presenting for first reading a bill entitled the Martin Luther King Jr. Day Act, 1987, to highlight officially and declare the third Monday in January of each year as Martin Luther King Jr. Day in Ontario.

The purpose of this bill is to highlight the major contribution to the civil rights and human rights movement in the United States made by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. It was of great benefit not only to our citizens south of the border but also to people of all races, not only in the US but also throughout the world, including Canada.

I want to remind members that various communities in Ontario and other provinces will be celebrating this very special day on January 19, 1987, by marking it with special prayers and services in churches, community organizations and community halls.

I would appreciate if, through the arrangement of the government House leader and the agreement of the House leaders of the two opposition parties, we could have unanimous consent to speedy passage of this private bill and mark the initiative of Ontario and Canada on this special occasion.

Mr. Rae: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I wonder if I might have the unanimous consent of the House to make a brief statement about the passing of someone whom I know all of us want to recognize. I refer to the tragic death last week of Margaret Laurence.

Agreed to.

MARGARET LAURENCE

Mr. Rae: I know other members will want to have an opportunity to say something about the tragic passing of Margaret Laurence last week. On behalf of members of my party, I want to say a few brief words about this quite outstanding and remarkable Canadian writer, humanist and spokesperson for human courage and for the human condition.

Margaret Laurence served this country far better than she knew, by the quality of her writing, by the courage of her prose and by the outstanding work she did on behalf of Canadian literature and Canadian consciousness in her life's work. She is known as a novelist to all of us and as someone whose work has spoken of human courage and of so-called average Canadi-

ans, showing them not to be average at all but to be the outstanding people we know them to be.

She was a woman of enormous personal courage, particularly in the battle she fought against her last illness. She was a consistent fighter for peace. She spoke courageously against those who would attempt to prevent her work from being widely distributed and read and she spoke courageously against censorship and on behalf of human freedom.

I take special pride in the life and work of Margaret Laurence. Perhaps I can say this because she was a very dedicated social democrat. She was never afraid to speak her mind and to give support to our party at a time when not so many others were prepared to do so, but it is not in any partisan spirit that we celebrate her life and recognize her passing.

I would like to quote for honourable members from her last novel, *The Diviners*, in which one of the characters, whom we all know by the name of Pique, had a song. I would like to read this song into the record:

There's a valley holds my name, now I know.
In the tales they used to tell it seemed so low.

There's a valley way down there.

I used to dream it like a prayer.

And my fathers, they lived there long ago.

There's a mountain holds my name, close to
the sky.

And those stories made that mountain seem so
high.

There's a mountain way up there.

I used to dream I'd breathe its air

And hear the voices that in me would never
die.

I came to taste the dust out on a prairie road.

My childhood thoughts were heavy on me like
a load

But I left behind my fear

When I found those ghosts were near

Leadin' me back to that home I never knowed.

Ah, my valley and my mountain, they're the
same

My living places, and they will never be tame.

When I think how I was born

I can't help but being torn

But the valley and the mountain hold my
name.

The valley and the mountain hold my name.

We in Ontario hold the name of Margaret Laurence very close to our hearts.

Ms. Fish: I join the leader of the third party in expressing on behalf of my party considerable sadness and regret at the passing of a great

woman, a great author and a great Canadian. Margaret Laurence's works were fiction, but in the course of a very extraordinary fiction she showed us life. In her work she never shied away from tackling the difficult, the ugly, the sewer aspects of our society. She showed us the ways in which we could overcome our problems, mindful of some of the more basic traditions of our culture as Canadians.

It is perhaps a mark of someone who was able to show us ourselves in the mirror of the fiction she wrote that she was so often the subject of attack on her works. Various efforts were mounted to remove them from the very place they most should be—in the hands of our young people thinking about our society, about our province and about our country.

It is with considerable sadness that we are aware that she was unable in her last several years to continue producing very much work because of the illnesses she confronted, and perhaps also because of the wounding of the attacks that had been made on her work. As a woman who stood out so strongly for freedom of thought, as a woman who was so clear on the importance of showing to all in society through her work the warts and the ugly sides so that we might mend them, she was a woman particularly hurt by those who would choose to have that very truth taken from the shelves and from the hands, the eyes, the minds and understanding of the people of this province, particularly our youth.

If we remember people after their passing, surely we remember them for their contributions. We also think of them in their lives. Margaret, we will always think of you in the life you showed us through your works. We are sad at your passing.

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Hon. Ms. Munro: I would like to join my colleagues in the Legislature in mourning the passing of a great and visionary Canadian cultural figure.

Margaret Laurence will be well remembered and history will show that she was a woman who fought for the rights of many people. She was a very famous novelist, and will be recorded as such because she had so many of the values we often say separate us, as human beings, from the animal world. She was able to reflect on emotions and to encapsulate emotions in her writings that often expressed the need for pressing and very real social change. She was able to pass those feelings down to each of us.

As a woman, I am particularly proud not only to have met her but also to have reaped the

benefits of her thoughts and lifestyle. She was many things to many people and always will be. Her ability to portray us for all people to read about, and for us to grow as we read about ourselves, was a true gift that she did not exploit but worked on for the benefit of us all.

Her characters will never be forgotten. I think of *The Stone Angel* and *The Diviners* and I know that I developed because of her compassion for other people. Her sense of humour allowed her to reach out to us and to lay before us the paradoxes, the despair and the laughter of the human race. She was indeed a person. She was fiercely Canadian. She was a woman interested in and acting on behalf of women. She was embraced by all of us. She was a true friend to many. The life and works of Margaret Laurence have been a legacy to all of us.

Thank you very much for allowing me to speak.

Mr. Speaker: I thank the members who have spoken. As usual, when Hansard is printed I will make certain that these words of sympathy are sent to the appropriate persons.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Hon. Mr. Wrye: Today, I am pleased to present the report of the external review by Geoffrey McKenzie and John Laskin on the administration of the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

The report makes a number of recommendations that will help advance the government's response to the work place health and safety challenge. It dismisses without reservation allegations that Ministry of Labour officials and managers deliberately sought to undermine the enforcement of the law and to obstruct the administration of justice. I wish to express my appreciation to the staff of the ministry and others for the professionalism with which they have met their obligations during the conduct of the review. For many, this has not been an easy time.

Before I make detailed comment on the substance of the report, let me recall how the review came to be commissioned in the first place.

In the spring of 1986, the government determined that a thorough review of the administration of the act was necessary. The health and safety service had been seriously neglected at a time when the public was demanding improved work place health and safety. We decided to invite Mr. McKenzie to help us assess the strengths and weaknesses of

the system and to recommend changes that would permit the health and safety division to reflect, in its activities, the political direction of the new Liberal government. Mr. McKenzie, as the managing partner of the Coopers and Lybrand Consulting Group and as a consultant broadly experienced in policy development, planning and organization, was ideally suited to examine management policies and practices.

Then, last May, the Ontario Public Service Employees Union made a number of very serious public allegations about the attitudes and conduct of ministry officials and managers publicly entrusted to administer the law, allegations impugning the very integrity of those officials and managers. As a result, I announced not only Mr. McKenzie's appointment but also the appointment of John Laskin to investigate all cases in which it was alleged that ministry personnel had behaved improperly. Mr. Laskin is counsel to the law firm of Davies, Ward and Beck. He has extensive human rights experience and, through his service as counsel to the Royal Commission on Matters of Health and Safety Arising from the Use of Asbestos in Ontario, intimate knowledge of many occupational health and safety issues.

In their report, the reviewers reject totally, categorically and in the strongest terms all the allegations. They report and judge the detail of 77 cases and in the process cite instances of mistake, error in judgement and inadequate response to work place problems. In short, they find human imperfection; but let no one confuse imperfection with impropriety and let no one impugn any further the integrity of officials and managers within our occupational health and safety service.

On the management audit side of the review, the reviewers find much that is right and much that needs improving. They find that the underpinnings of the occupational health and safety system are sound. They endorse the principle that the primary responsibility for occupational health and safety must rest mutually with management and labour in the work place. This is known as the internal responsibility system.

This principle is a very important one. Here is what it means to this minister and this government. First, management, with its resources, has the weight of responsibility for ensuring work place health and safety. Second, workers have vital responsibility as well. Third, if employers and workers fail to fulfil their mutual responsibilities, they can be assured this government will not hesitate to act.

In the context of the need for an internal responsibility system that works well, the reviewers make a number of recommendations to increase the capacity and authority of joint labour-management health and safety committees. They also take special account of workers in small work places that are not required by law to establish health and safety committees. They make major and important recommendations concerning the qualifications, recruitment, training, career development, compensation and status of inspectors.

As well, the reviewers make a number of recommendations designed to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the occupational health and safety service: further regionalization, improved information systems and the enhancement of the single-window service in which one inspector or technical specialist co-ordinates all contacts between the work place and the ministry.

On the whole, the report's recommendations on management policy, practice and organization are sensible. A number can be implemented readily, and I undertake to do this. Indeed, in some cases, the process of reform began some time ago, and the report's recommendations confirm the wisdom of the government's actions.

A second group of recommendations has direct cost implications. Last fall, I alerted my colleague the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) to the service's need for more money. This report will help us to define the areas of greatest need.

A third group, those concerning reorganization, requires a careful consultation process with staff at all levels to proceed towards implementation. There are significant benefits in the concept of the decentralized and regionalized management structure the report recommends. However, careful preparation of staff, management processes and an assured funding base are essential for the major organizational changes contemplated. My deputy minister, Glenn Thompson, is putting this consultative and preparatory process into action immediately.

Much of this report is about reform. That reform began when this government took office and continues today through administrative change, policy initiative and legislative amendment.

Fifteen months ago, we instituted a new orders policy. In it, we abolished the reissuing of orders and prescribed specific deadlines for compliance with orders, all to enforce the act with greater vigour and toughness.

Twelve months ago, we introduced Bill 101, which set out the most progressive worker and community right to know about potentially hazardous materials in the work place of any jurisdiction in Canada.

Ten months ago, we put into place two new designated substance regulations, one for asbestos in the construction, building and repair area, and the other to control arsenic. Eight more of these special regulations to control the most hazardous and pervasive substances are in the final stages.

Three months ago, we filed a group of important occupational safety regulations to provide protection with regard to crane operations, commercial diving, offshore oil and gas drilling and X-ray use.

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Two months ago, we filed a critical new regulation to increase worker protection from harmful exposures to toxic agents and to strengthen the government's hand in enforcing the law.

Last month, we successfully concluded negotiations to establish a national work place hazardous materials information system. The government of Ontario played a pivotal leadership role here.

While all of this has been going on, we have been able to build the service: almost 100 new people at an annual salary cost of nearly \$4 million and a major expansion of our training programs.

The challenge of government is to make things work. It is a far more weighty and worthy challenge than that of pulling things apart by unjust accusations.

The reform process we have just come through has been exhaustive and unrelenting, but it has yielded important insights that will help Ontario become the leading jurisdiction for work place health and safety in all North America.

In the end, that is the goal to which we all aspire.

TARIFFS ON SOFTWOOD LUMBER

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: I would like to inform the House of my government's response to a recent agreement between the federal government and the United States to impose a 15 per cent export tax on softwood lumber.

We have been opposed to these negotiations from the beginning. As I wrote in a letter to US Commerce Secretary Malcolm Baldrige on December 15, we believe that the information and methodology used by the US to reach its position

in the preliminary determination was flawed and that the decision went far beyond the scope and intention of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. Further, our belief in the integrity and fairness of our forest management programs is so strong that we believe the US position could have been successfully challenged.

A very impressive case against the preliminary determination was made to the Department of Commerce by the Canadian lumber industry. The Ontario government took the position of supporting the lumber industry in its fight against the arbitrary imposition of countervailing duties by the US.

Instead, an agreement to terminate the countervailing duty investigation was reached on December 30 between the Canadian and American governments, without the support of the Ontario government. Again, Ontario was not alone in its opposition to negotiating an agreement. We have had the support of almost the entire Canadian lumber industry, including the Ontario forest industry, the Canadian Forest Industry Council and the lumber and sawmill workers' union.

The softwood lumber agreement with the US puts a 15 per cent tax on the final mill price of all softwood lumber exports to the US. Ottawa has apparently accepted the responsibility to collect at least \$500 million each year in export duties. This tax can be reduced or eliminated if the provinces agree to increase the stumpage or other charges they impose on producers, but the calculation of the value of these replacement measures must be approved by federal and US officials.

My government finds this agreement totally unacceptable. We believe that major components of the Canadian-US softwood lumber agreement constitute a significant intrusion on provincial sovereignty. In fact, imposing an export tax on a provincial resource in this manner would appear to be a violation of provincial jurisdiction under the Constitution. Not only does it intrude on the provinces' rights to exercise control over provincial resources, but also it puts the management of our Canadian forest resources under the supervision of the US government.

Under the terms of this agreement, the money Ottawa collects will be closely monitored by the US to make sure Canadian producers or exporters do not receive any benefit from it. Moreover, the US government must approve the calculation of the value of replacement measures and has interpreted this to mean US approval for any reduction in the federal export charges. In

addition, the US will oversee Canadian measures such as the provision of grants, low-cost loans and the awarding of contracts for forestry activities on a noncompetitive basis.

These conditions impose serious limitations on the capability of the province to develop policies or programs, or even to deliver existing programs to assist the Ontario softwood lumber industry towards further modernization and international competitiveness. Further, it sets major constraints on the flexibility or the ability of the provinces to use the export tax revenues to support affected firms, workers and communities.

The federal government would have us believe that the agreement preserves for the provinces exclusive responsibility over our forest management policies. However, the US government, in close consultation with the US softwood lumber industry, can determine that provincial measures to replace the federal export tax are unacceptable and violate the US interpretation of the December 30 agreement.

If the agreement, as interpreted by the US, has been violated, the US will be able to take further unilateral action against Canadian softwood lumber exports. In this case, tariffs or other retaliatory measures on Canadian exports can be imposed by administration fiat, and Canadian defence in US courts is then very limited. Indeed, the threat of unilateral retaliation provides even less certainty for Canadian softwood lumber exporters as a result of this agreement.

The US has spelled out its interpretation of the agreement in a letter from Malcolm Baldrige and Clayton Yeutter to the Coalition for Fair Lumber Imports. The Canadian government has stated that this letter was not the subject of negotiations and is not part of the agreement. Nevertheless, in the case of disagreement between the parties as to interpretation of the agreement, the US industry would certainly submit the letter as evidence of the meaning of the agreement. The US government would be hard pressed, both politically and legally, to disavow its own interpretation as expressed in the letter.

I have described in some detail a few of Ontario's major concerns with this agreement in terms of the loss of provincial sovereignty and the threat of US retaliation. I believe the federal government must address these concerns. Equally if not more important, we view this agreement as a capitulation to US protectionism that will encourage similar actions in the future against other provincially controlled resources and Ontario exporters. This agreement promises to have

a devastating effect on the economy and social fabric of northern Ontario communities.

Many towns in northern Ontario are dependent on a single industry: forestry. There are few other opportunities for these people to find other employment. Yet not only do we find ourselves hurt by a situation that has been thrust upon us, the terms of the agreement, as I described earlier, could well prevent us from helping those workers who have lost their jobs because of the export tax or those communities that are dependent on the forest sector.

Since the federal government is directly responsible for creating this situation, I am aggressively seeking federal assistance to help alleviate the suffering it is going to cause. Ottawa must assume responsibility for creating this situation and must show leadership in helping the provinces deal with the consequences. I will be meeting with Miss Carney and the other provincial ministers in Vancouver next Wednesday and I will be discussing these concerns at that time. I am also very concerned about what will happen to the approximately \$500 million the federal government expects to collect as a result of this tax.

At the first ministers' conference in Vancouver, the Prime Minister committed himself to a 100 per cent flowback of any export tax revenues to the provinces affected. I fully expect the Prime Minister will honour that commitment. In addition, the financial flowback must not disrupt previously negotiated federal-provincial funding programs, including forest management agreements.

Finally, I am concerned about the fact that this agreement may result in the diversion of lumber from one province to another. For example, if excess lumber from the west coast is directed to Ontario because the export tax has priced it out of traditional US markets, it could lead to even more layoffs in this province. The federal government has failed to address this possibility.

Ontario's opposition to this agreement is clear. We will be doing everything in our power to reduce the inevitable job loss and decline in economic activity that this agreement will cause, and we will be working with the other provinces as much as possible to minimize the harm the agreement is going to do to Canada.

RESPONSES

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr. Gillies: With regard to the statement made by the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye) today, I would say on behalf of our party that for

the member for Windsor-Sandwich to retain any credibility whatsoever as Minister of Labour, he should have moved very quickly today to dissociate himself from this report by Messrs. Laskin and McKenzie. This report is as close to a self-serving whitewash as I have ever seen brought into this House by the Minister of Labour or by any other member of this government. The report and the minister's response to the report fail completely to allow the minister to take responsibility for the operations of his own ministry and to take responsibility for a deteriorating situation in terms of health and safety in the work places of this province.

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The report, in turn, blames the problems in occupational health and safety on the labour movement, the media, "a concerned public" and the opposition. I want to quote from the executive summary of this report regarding the labour movement. Lord knows I have had and will have my disagreements with the labour movement, but I want to read this into the record.

"At least some members of the latter group"—referring to organized labour in this province—"are ideologically opposed to co-operative solutions and believe that the system must be changed. Unfortunately, there is evidence that members of this group have another agenda and are using occupational health and safety to achieve other objectives."

For all the disagreements I may have had with labour in this province, I have never seen any agenda on the part of the labour movement in this province but the improvement of occupational health and safety and the reduction of accidents, injuries and deaths. For the report to suggest otherwise and for the minister to associate himself with this report in that regard is disgraceful. The labour movement in this province deserves an apology from this minister rather than the endorsement of this report.

Page 185 of the report cites a lack of leadership from the minister's office in this regard. While the minister would parrot and prattle on about reform and improvement in this area, the report does nothing to propose solutions to the very basic fact that the work place in this province is less safe now than it was the day this government took office, and the situation with deaths and injuries is completely unsatisfactory.

As recently as today's morning papers, we see yet further accusations by inspectors within the minister's own staff about interference with their ability to do their jobs from senior officials. We in this party have withheld from joining with the

third party and calling for the resignation of the minister. His inability to come to grips with this issue makes it necessary for us to join with the New Democratic Party and say this minister has to resign.

TARIFFS ON SOFTWOOD LUMBER

Mr. Grossman: I rise to address the rather fatuous statement made by the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio). He talks at some length about having been opposed to these negotiations from the beginning. In point of fact, this minister accepted and was part of the Canadian offer to accept 10 per cent. The day the 15 per cent was announced, this minister stood up in this House and suggested it was good news for Canadians because only 1,000 jobs would be lost.

The minister goes on to suggest that the federal government alone created this situation. In 1983, the Americans were considering the same information. In 1983, the then Minister of Natural Resources made four trips to Washington to argue the Canadian case; this minister made none. His Premier (Mr. Peterson) went to Hollywood for a gala. This minister went to Hong Kong, China and everywhere else in the Far East. No one went to Washington to speak for Ontarians.

All we can conclude from this is that Ontario's interests were not represented in Washington by this government and that British Columbia's Influence was more effectively exercised by its Premier than ours was by our Premier. The British Columbia position prevailed. Our position did not prevail in Ottawa or in Washington because it was never put by this government or by this minister. It is fatuous for him now to stand up and cry over the 1,000 jobs that will be lost, which he said was good news for Ontarians.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Further responses, the member for Sudbury East.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr. Martel: In 20 years in this Legislature, I have never seen a more rotten report in my life. It is sick. It is about as sick as the minister. This minister, who had to get rid of a deputy and a whole group of people because he could not get control of his own ministry, goes on with this game continuously. He should not have allowed this in the first place.

My leader and I opposed this sort of inquiry right from the beginning. We said it was wrong and we said the minister had to have a system

whereby he could cross-examine witnesses so he could use the law to determine whether he was getting at the facts. He chose to do a little in-house inquiry, a little private inquiry, which is the worst snow job I have ever seen in my life. There is none worse.

It says categorically that all the allegations made by the Ontario Public Service Employees Union and all the allegations I have made over the year are unfounded. It says some of us have our own game plan, a hidden agenda. Before the minister is done today, he is going to tell me what that hidden agenda is. It goes on and on.

There are three main contentions by the union, but this report says he should not do any further investigation, everything is okay; do not do any further investigation. It is a whitewash from square one.

The report says, "For them, enforcement of the occupational health and safety legislation should be no different than the enforcement of the Highway Traffic Act and even the Criminal Code." Imagine that. We want people to live up to the act that is before us.

McKenzie is saying, "You want that operated in the same fashion." He is darned right we do. When one contravenes the act, one pays the price for it. It is interesting that when one walks into a job site and a worker does not have his glasses on, he is fined on the spot. If he does not have his helmet on, he is fined; but that does not happen to management, they can go on flagrantly abusing the act.

This tough minister has taken out of his own annual report the section that tell us where companies have failed to comply with the orders. He improved it; he simply removed that section. Noncompliance is gone now. The minister shakes his head. He is going to have to show me where noncompliance is in the 1986 report. That category has been removed.

This report says in another place that when matters are raised in the Legislature the Ministry of Labour then goes out and corrects them. He talks about Valenite-Modco, Domtar, de Havilland, Westinghouse, Robert Hunt—all the cases that were raised here. The ministry has yet to answer in most cases.

He says, on one hand, those are the way we get things corrected. For every one we can raise in this House, there are 100 out there not being dealt with. This minister used this underhanded, sleazy way of getting a report that does not deal with the issue. The minister bears the responsibility for this. He can blame his staff, he can

blame McKenzie and Laskin; we said it was going to be a whitewash.

Rather than helping the minister, this is going to unify the trade union movement as it has not been unified in a long time. It has been highly critical, blaming the workers of this province in a conspiratorial fashion, with a hidden agenda to get things changed. We are going to get them changed, and my friend is going to pay the political price for this. It is a snow job from square one.

TARIFFS ON SOFTWOOD LUMBER

Mr. Laughren: I want to respond to the very self-serving comments of the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio). I notice in his statement he gave us no indication of any kind of program or timetable for negotiating with the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade people. Why did the minister not give us some explanation of how it was that our Premier (Mr. Peterson) went to British Columbia for that meeting with the Prime Minister and was outmuscled by Bill Vander Zalm? Why was it that Bill Vander Zalm got his way and our Premier did not get our way? That needs to be answered. Why was he so cleanly and clearly outmanoeuvred by the Premier of British Columbia?

1420

About four years ago, this party had a task force on forestry, in which we indicated there were some problems out there with our stumpage fees. I am not surprised that what has happened has happened.

ORAL QUESTIONS

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr. Grossman: I have a question for the Minister of Labour. We would like to ask him some questions relating to what is yet another example of how the government seems to want to move from alleging to be the most open to being the most secretive and whitewashing government extant.

Does the minister agree with some statements in this report that he has so warmly endorsed this afternoon? In the executive summary, on page iii, in an attempt to blame everyone but the minister for the problems in the work place, the report says, "Unfortunately, there is evidence that members of..."—the labour movement—"have another agenda and are using occupational health and safety to achieve their objectives."

On page 8, the report then blames the media, saying, "This balanced, objective interpretation

of occupational health and safety issues by the press in Ontario has been lacking.”

Will the minister this afternoon endorse the theory that the labour movement and the media are to blame for some of the problems? Does he specifically endorse these statements from the report?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I am delighted to get a question on this subject from the Leader of the Opposition, who has apparently discovered health and safety issues.

If the Leader of the Opposition is asking me whether I endorse comments by Mr. McKenzie that seek to place blame, I would want to place blame where it belongs, and that is on an administration that left not only the division but also the whole Ministry of Labour in an abject mess.

The reason I am so glad the Leader of the Opposition has asked me that question is that I want to remind him that he was Treasurer of Ontario between July 1983 and May 1985. Thus, he was responsible for the budgetary expenditure in fiscal year 1984-85.

I remind the House that in that year the total expenditures for all government ministries went up by 7.9 per cent. In that same year, the expenditure for the Ministry of Labour went down by three tenths of one per cent. What a sterling commitment to health and safety.

Mr. Grossman: I have some advice for the minister. He and his staff, who are subject to criticism in this report, which tries hard not to criticize him for having failed to communicate with his officials and bureaucrats, might spend more time worrying about occupational health and safety in the province than about getting someone on his staff to work on calculations with regard to what the budget was four years ago.

Specifically, does the minister agree with the report, which alleges that the labour movement and the media are somehow to blame for the problems he faces? That has nothing to do with what happened before he took office. It has to do with a statement that has been made. We are asking the self-styled “minister for labour” to tell us whether he agrees with those statements. Does he or does he not?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: Those are the statements of an individual who has taken a look at the management of the division and has delivered himself of his opinion. That is his opinion. I am more concerned with, and in my statement I commented on, the recommendations he makes in the policy area in terms of practice and organization. I do not know what prompted Mr.

McKenzie to make those comments. I did not ask him about them, but I read them and took note of them.

It is not the first time I have heard those comments made by individuals, but if I can reiterate, in terms of blame, the Leader of the Opposition and the former Treasurer for this province ought to know where the blame is for the fact that when we took office the number of construction inspectors had diminished to 66. The blame lies across the aisle on that side.

Interjections.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: The member for Brantford (Mr. Gillies) asked me what we have done about it. The construction inspectorate is back up to just under 90 and will continue to grow as quickly as we can hire and properly train the inspectors.

Mr. Grossman: Let us deal with this. This is a report which has been described by our colleagues in the New Democratic Party as a whitewash if ever there was one, one that attempts to blame the media and the labour movement, anyone except the minister who ultimately has the responsibility, whether he likes it or not, for occupational health and safety in this province.

The most condemning thing is written on pages 185 and 186. It does not talk about what happened in 1981, 1983 or 1984. It says this minister has failed to provide leadership; that he has not given direction through the ministry; that he has failed to send clear messages or support his own people; and, unbelievably, after two years in office, it recommends the bold step that the Minister of Labour visit the field offices.

Given the condemning nature of those recommendations with regard to the government's year and a half in office, given the fact that both the minister and his deputy are appointees of the Premier (Mr. Peterson) and given the fact that the minister has had a year and a half to clean up this mess and bring back the inspection level to the 1981 level, will the minister properly serve the injured workers of this province and the workers who are not yet injured by agreeing with the NDP suggestion that he and his deputy resign now and let us start over again?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: We have now redressed the levels of inspectors virtually to the 1980 levels. We have undone the foolishness that the Leader of the Opposition's government and he, as Treasurer, were responsible for, and that is where the responsibility lies.

While we have been doing it, we have virtually doubled the number of lawyers in our legal branch from the days when the member for

Brantford was the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Labour when nothing was happening. We have added more than 30 people to the occupational health branch. In short, as I said in my statement, we have added approximately 100 people to the division. We have added enormous new resources and will continue to add more.

Mr. Grossman: Does the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) know the ministry has more lawyers and fewer successful prosecutions? That is the record.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: Roy McMurty is in England.

Mr. Grossman: And he is embarrassed by what has happened over there in his former job since he left. He notices that whenever the Attorney General is in trouble he invokes Mr. McMurty's name, but it will not help him.

1430

AUTO PACT

Mr. Grossman: I have a question of the Premier, who has been ruminating lately about the auto pact in fear over its being on the negotiating table. Can the Premier inform us today what the termination provisions in the auto pact are?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I believe there is a year's notice.

Mr. Grossman: The Premier is not sure or else he would have spoken more loudly, as we have come to learn here.

Canada is running a huge surplus under the auto pact provisions and the Americans can at any time give one year's notice of their intention to terminate the auto pact, with or without free trade discussions. Given that this government so ignored the softwood lumber problem that it did nothing about it until the decision was made, can the Premier tell us specifically what he and his ministers are doing to ensure that the Americans from Washington do not give that one year's notice under the auto pact?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I find the honourable member's questions most strange, but let me do the best I can with a very strange question. The member will be aware that over the life of the auto pact, which I believe is about 22 years, it has involved—I could be wrong about the figure—around \$60 billion. It has netted out over the years. Some years Canada wins and some years the United States wins, but on balance it has netted out well.

It has been called by many people, including the chairman of General Motors, one of the

greatest trade instruments ever devised, certainly in North America. The member will know the importance of that document to Ontario and to the rest of Canada. This is a point that has been made on many occasions by me and by my colleagues to the Prime Minister, who is a close associate of the member. I hope he will make the very same point to the Prime Minister and to Miss Carney, who now is responsible for these matters.

Obviously, one of my concerns is that this matter may come up during the so-called free trade discussions, whenever they are, that the federal government is having and that they may want to get it on the table. I think that invites a look at this. It could be very harmful to Ontario and to Canada. I am saying to the Prime Minister, to Miss Carney and to anyone else there who will listen: "Do not touch the auto pact. Leave it as it is. It has worked well. It has allowed the industry to put investments in place around it. It is something that everyone understands well." I do not think there is any merit at all in touching the situation.

Mr. Grossman: Every Canadian agrees with that position. No Canadian I know of is advocating anything but leaving it alone. The issue has nothing to do with whether the Premier is encouraging the Prime Minister or anyone else to leave the auto pact alone. Every Canadian agrees with leaving the auto pact alone. The issue, just like softwood lumber, is that the Americans are angry over certain practices and may give the one year's notice that they have always had the right to give and terminate the auto pact. It is just as with softwood lumber. This government did nothing to go to Washington to make sure that action was not taken. Similarly on this issue, it is doing nothing to make sure action is not taken.

We know of the Premier's early dedication to no walls and no barriers. I wonder whether he might make public to us and to everyone else the now-famous leaked document of David Barrows on this whole issue. Will he make that public?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: That analysis by one public official was made public and I am not happy about that situation. It is not something I was aware of or encouraged. The answer is no.

Mr. Grossman: You will not? Why not?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: No, I will not. I answered the question. The reason is that I do not think it is helpful to circulate all these opinions that various people have. It is only part of the greater package, an enormous amount of correspondence on this one subject.

Mr. Grossman: Freedom of information.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: My friend will be aware that he is part of a party that never would bring in freedom of information legislation. I appreciate his recent conversion to our point of view in that regard. I do not think it was ever the intention of freedom of information legislation to include private correspondence, advice to cabinet or interdepartmental memos. I do not think that is particularly helpful. I regret it when these things are leaked, as they are from time to time—far too many around here for my taste—but there you have it. I do not think it is constructive to debate. If he wants to ask any questions on the subject, we will be happy to answer them.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr. Rae: I have a question for the Minister of Labour. Even in this most abject of whitewashes, without any basic legal protection for the people asking for an investigation, without the right to cross-examine, without the right to call witnesses, without the right to subpoena evidence, without the right to do any of those things, even given that, this report states:

“In Valenite-Modco, Domtar, de Havilland, Westinghouse, Mack Canada, American Can, Fleet Industries and Robert Hunt we concluded that the ministry did not take sufficient measures to ensure that levels of toxic substances were reduced within an acceptable period of time. What makes some of these cases even more troubling is that no substantial improvements to conditions at the various plants appear to have been achieved until concerns were raised in the news media and in the Legislature.”

Given the importance of that statement and some of the evidence I am going to ask the minister about, why did he choose to side with Mr. McKenzie in the very cheap statements he made with respect to those who raised these allegations? In particular, why did he choose to say, “The challenge of government...is a far more weighty and worthy challenge than that of pulling things apart by unjust accusations,” when the report itself states that were it not for accusations made by people such as my colleague the member for Sudbury East (Mr. Martel) this evidence would never have been brought to light and people would never have been helped by the actions of government itself?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: It is the honourable member's interpretation as to whom I was making those comments about. That is his interpretation. I can only say—

Mr. Rae: All right. Whom are you accusing? Come clean; tell us who it is. Get out from behind the sleaze and tell us who is unjustly accusing whom.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: If the member of the third party, who gives out cheap shots so quickly but does not like it when somebody actually responds to him, would let me answer the question—

Mr. Martel: Name me, you dog. If you want to name me, go ahead.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Will the member for Sudbury East contain himself?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I was in Sudbury last week trying to work with my friend the member for Sudbury East. It was all so successful then; now here we are back in the House.

Let me suggest to the leader of the third party there is no doubt, as I read the specific case details of the Laskin cases—some of which occurred after I took office, or at least part of them—that a number of the cases were very troubling. I acknowledge that a number of these cases were resolved only after the kind of activity he describes: input in the Legislature and in the media. I acknowledge that. I also want to point out to my friend that, not in all cases but certainly in some of them, I think he would want to acknowledge that those cases are several years old.

Indeed, if I could use Valenite-Modco, because I am very familiar with it, when the government took office and the employer missed a compliance deadline eight days later, he was given a stop-work order. When the employer said he could not meet a compliance deadline at the end of October, we indicated that if he did not meet the compliance deadline there would be a stop-work order. In both cases, having had that threat of tough action, the employer met the deadlines.

Mr. Rae: In the minister's statement he has given credence to a very sleazy accusation made by the authors of this report. He himself has made a similar sleazy accusation in saying there have been unjust accusations without naming any of the individuals involved who have made these unjust accusations, or indeed telling us what they are. If the minister thinks he is going to get away with that kind of intimidation in this Legislature with respect to any member of this party, he is sadly mistaken. He will rue the day he made the kind of statement he made in this House today.

Mr. Speaker: Question?

Mr. Rae: With respect to one particular company, American Can—and we are not dealing simply with a company; we are dealing with individuals, individual workers who have suffered irreparable and irreversible neurological damage—can the minister explain why it is that in the report no reference is made to those individuals, when their names were well known and their cases well documented? Can he explain why in fact there is in this entire report no sense, not of individual companies but of individual people whose lives are put at risk every day because of the neglect of this government and the neglect of this minister with respect to occupational health and safety?

1440

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I think Mr. Laskin indicated right at the outset—the honourable gentleman may disagree, but I do not—that other than those places where it would be useful and appropriate to name names—and that included members of the Legislature, by the way, against whom a number of comments were made—he would not do so. I noted, as I quickly glanced at American Can, that he described one of the workers—and I was certainly aware of the name—referred to by the leader of the third party.

I suppose—and the member will have to ask Mr. Laskin that question, and perhaps he may want to some time in casual conversation—Mr. Laskin decided on a fairly dispassionate description of the cases as he found them and his conclusions on them; but let there be no mistake about the willingness and determination of this minister and this government to turn Ontario into the finest health and safety jurisdiction in all North America. We have made a start. There is a long way to go, but let me be equally clear that I think both reports make it clear that we are on the right track. I am determined to see the matter through to a successful conclusion.

Mr. Rae: I do not know how the minister can say the report says he is on the right track. There is not a person in Ontario who knows what the hell track he is on.

Mr. Speaker: Is there a question?

Mr. Rae: The minister wants to talk about his track. We have not seen any legislation dealing with the major issues involved in this report. Despite the fact that it is a whitewash, an inquiry that gave no rights to those people who had questions to raise with respect to cross-examination of evidence, with respect to a challenge to answers made to certain questions, it had, in the words of the report, “the advantages

of candour, informality and expedition”; advantages to those in management and the ministry but not advantages to those concerned about health and safety with respect to the future of the province.

Can the minister tell us why in his statement today he made absolutely no reference to new legislation with respect to occupational health and safety, to a new response and reorganization of his ministry, which is clearly called for, and why he is not prepared to take responsibility for the neglect, which is documented even in this document, in several cases we have raised in this Legislature?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: Sometimes I wonder whether some people would have been just as happy if we had had some kind of body count of misconduct. That is not the way I view life. Frankly, on a personal basis, I am delighted and happy that no individual has been found guilty of misconduct and of resolute reluctance to prosecute. I know there are certain areas of serious neglect. I was aware, and had been for months, that we missed a couple of prosecution dates. That is inexcusable to me.

Mr. Laskin says—and I think it is important to read this into the record because the member and I have a disagreement—that:

“They argued that where misconduct is the issue, a public inquiry with the right of cross-examination for all interested parties better ensures a full airing of all the pertinent facts. As against that position, it may be fairly argued that the review process that was established had the advantages of candour, informality and expedition.” He concludes, “Indeed, we are satisfied that several persons we questioned would not have spoken to us under the glare of a public hearing.”

There it is, one view on one side and the other view on the other side. Obviously, there were two choices to make, and we made the choice we did.

Mr. Rae: I suspect the minister is embarrassing to even his own colleagues.

AUTO PACT

Mr. Rae: I have a question for the Premier about the auto pact. We have now had the advantage of a published memo in the Montreal Gazette, as well as the documents we released in November on which the Premier commented at that time. To quote the words of Mr. Barrows’s memorandum, “Mr. Reisman and the Tories are out of control and apparently willing to scrap the

auto pact. Is that the position of the government of Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: That memo was the result of a report by one particular official in the ministry to his superiors. I would not go that far at the moment. We garner information from a variety of sources, and one is monitoring very closely what is happening at the official level. Officials talk to officials, and the view of the federal government may not necessarily be the view of some official who is working on a particular project at some time.

I would not go that far, but I want the member to know that I am sufficiently worried about these matters and others. I have shared my views with the House, the Prime Minister, the minister and anyone else who will listen. These are matters upon which not just this government but also, I suspect, every member of this House feels very strongly.

Mr. Rae: We all feel strongly about it, but after a year and a half in government we are still in the dark about the Premier's position once it is clear the auto pact is on the table. We have been saying time and again during that year and a half that it is obvious it is on the table.

Given the memorandum from Mr. Barrows, given the internal cabinet document we released in November and given my understanding today that our federal research office has an internal memorandum from General Motors stating that GM has heard that the federal government has privately told Hyundai and Toyota that the auto pact will be dead within five years—given those three footprints in the sand that clearly tell us the position of the federal government, what is the Premier's position? What is he going to do to change that whole thrust of the federal discussion with respect to free trade?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: This is an initiative that has been undertaken by the federal government, not by me. If I had been asked to conduct these discussions in the first place, I would have conducted them in very different ways from what has been going on. It must come as no particular surprise to the honourable member that there are some very serious differences of opinion between the federal government and this government on a number of key issues of the day. We put those views through very forcefully. No one can tell what will happen in the future.

Interjections.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: If the member could tell his honourable friends to keep the noise down a

little, perhaps we could have a discussion in the House.

We are watching what is happening and at some point in the future we will have an opportunity to pass judgement on what they are doing.

Mr. Mackenzie: It is pretty obvious that it would be difficult for anybody to have a clear view of exactly where this provincial government is going based on the hearings and report of the select committee on economic affairs. Most of the time, the Liberal members on that committee were voting with the Tories on this issue. We tried to make it more specific in terms of what can happen and the difficulty in proceeding with these free trade talks.

It is obvious the talks are being carried on in an atmosphere of lies and deceit. It is very clear that is what is happening. We are not being told the truth. Even all the members of that committee agreed the auto pact could not be on the table. It is clearly obvious it is now on the table. Given that deceit in these talks and given the danger to this province of doing away with the auto pact, is the Premier prepared to use the clout Ontario has to end this bloody charade?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I do not know what the honourable member is suggesting in that regard. Perhaps he is suggesting that Ontario should say it is against discussing the auto pact. We have said that at least 100 times. I am not in a position to end the talks. The talks can go on with or without us. The member knows that as well as I do.

Interjection.

1450

Hon. Mr. Peterson: Similarly, I say to my honourable friend, if he will listen for a moment, that I was not in a position to end the discussions on softwood lumber. Mr. Mulroney takes advice from the people he trusts, perhaps the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Grossman), and he carries on and makes these judgements in that regard. Under the federal system, each of us has certain powers at certain times. We give the federal government the best advice we can. It listens to the members of the New Democratic Party and to our friends opposite and then makes its conclusions in that regard.

If the member is asking me to stand in this House to defend the federal government, I am not prepared to do that.

EMERGENCY HOUSING

Mr. Cousens: As the Minister of Community and Social Services will have read in today's

papers, a 54-year-old man was found frozen to death in an abandoned building yesterday morning. The minister has been warned repeatedly that there would be deaths this winter unless action was taken to solve the chronic problems of the province's homeless. The minister has chosen to ignore my warnings and those that came out of the Drina Joubert inquest. Did the minister refuse to do anything because he did not believe the warnings or because he is willing to accept these deaths as an inevitable part of urban life?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I will begin by saying neither of the above. I recognized not only the warnings of my honourable colleague opposite but also those from many others across Ontario that the crisis he has described exists. However, in this situation, the gentleman he refers to has used the hostel system in this city on a number of occasions. The hostel he used most frequently was just around the corner from where he was found, and there were empty spaces in it that night. This was known to him, and he chose not to take advantage of it.

Mr. Cousens: The problem is deeper than the minister would have us assume. The minister has done nothing to correct the acute shortage of hostel spaces in Toronto. He has done nothing to provide affordable homes to the more than 12,000 people who are homeless. As a result, police have nowhere to take these people and leave them on the street to die. The police are expecting even more deaths this winter. Tonight the temperature will be below freezing once again.

Mr. Speaker: And the supplementary is?

Mr. Cousens: Can the minister tell us where these people should be taken tonight, or will we read about another death tomorrow?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: The information the honourable member shares with the House is not completely accurate. There are approximately 300 additional hostel spaces in Metro alone, mostly in the city of Toronto, over the winter months. Above and beyond the number last year, there are an additional 193 hostel spaces in the Metro area, mostly in the city of Toronto, for this winter. There is additional money for the Metro area, as there is across the whole province, for winter emergency programs. That is for the emergency shelters. That is there. There are available hostel spaces in this community, and particularly in this community, every single night.

The second point I would make in response to the member's observations is that last year my honourable colleague the Minister of Housing (Mr. Curling) announced an additional 67,000 units. In the past couple of months, above and beyond that, an additional 3,000 units were announced.

Mr. Cousens: They are not there now.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: They are in the process of being put in place. With his background, the honourable member knows as well as I do, and as well as my colleague the Minister of Housing does, that there is a time lag between those announcements and those new spaces being made available. In addition to those, spaces have been made available under the Renterprise program and under a number of other renter programs. The intent is to accept the premise of the honourable member, that some of the people who are using the hostels on a regular basis should be provided with ongoing housing. We accept that. That is the role of my colleague. He is fulfilling his role and I am fulfilling mine.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr. Martel: I have a question to the Minister of Labour. Since the Provincial Auditor was highly critical of his ministry in its failure to respond to problems, and since this report says: "They call for an expanded inspectorate, acting not as monitors, mediators and problem solvers, but as policemen...unfortunately, there is evidence that members of this group have another agenda and are using occupational health and safety to achieve other objectives," is the minister suggesting or does he agree with McKenzie that the Provincial Auditor is part of that hidden agenda? Is he prepared to tell us what the hidden agenda is since he so warmly endorsed this report?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: It is probably as well hidden to me as it is to the honourable member. Perhaps the member was not here for the beginning of my statement, but I think he mistakes what he was hearing. I indicated in my statement that in terms of Mr. McKenzie's review, I find much to commend in the suggestions of decentralization, of various levels of inspectorate and of greatly improved training, objectives I know my honourable friend endorses.

I do not know what Mr. McKenzie suggests when he talks of a hidden agenda. I do know the direction this government wishes to follow. We want to follow a direction in which the internal responsibility system, as the minister and as my honourable friend understand it, works and

works effectively in places such as Algoma, which was used as a case study.

The steelworkers' union and the management of Algoma Steel worked closely together to make the health and safety system work. Where it does not work, I believe the government has to be in a position, has to have the capabilities and has to have the systems in place to move in quickly: first, to fix the problem; and second, to make sure the IRS will work in the future.

Mr. Martel: McKenzie indicates that the hidden agenda is control of the production process. I find it offensive that he would even suggest that. Let me ask a supplementary about something on the same page.

Interjection.

Mr. Martel: That is what McKenzie says. McKenzie says the workers want control of the work place, and that is the hidden agenda.

Given that accident rates in the province went up by 24 per cent last year, by 24 per cent the year before and that we are now up to probably a 50 per cent increase in the past two or three years, does the minister believe the following statement by Mr. McKenzie on the same page of the report: "The management community has been essentially passive in the public debate, believing that they are in a 'no win' situation. Short of achieving a perfect accident and health record, they perceive that they will always be in a defensive position and therefore vulnerable"?

Is not McKenzie once again saying management is right and that the workers, the people who are getting hurt, are irresponsible and must be quiet, otherwise they will be condemned? Who has created this bloody problem if it is not management, which will not accept Bill 70?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: Again, I do not know what Mr. McKenzie is saying, but I suggest he is probably speaking about—I will go back to that example at Algoma—Mr. McKenzie is describing a situation where management has not been part of a dynamic in the work place that will lead to better health and safety, which ultimately the honourable gentleman and I both wish for.

Mr. Wildman: Until they hit economic problems, and then they start having problems.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: If the member for Algoma will let me continue, I believe that is exactly what Mr. McKenzie is speaking about.

While I am on my feet, in terms of the preamble, I regret that I continue to hear the kind of statistics from that side that can almost be described as disinformation. The fact is that the number of accidents in 1986 rose by 3.6 per cent,

which is much lower than the previous year, is lower than the year before that and is lower than the year before that. It is the lowest increase. They rose at a percentage that was about the percentage at which employment rose in the province, a much lower percentage than in many other provinces in this jurisdiction.

1500

INTERNATIONAL BANKING CENTRES

Mr. Ferraro: I have a question for the Treasurer. Specifically, it has two parts. The Treasurer will be aware, as are all the members of the House, about the absolutely ludicrous proposition we are reading about in the press in regard to the federal government's proposed designation of Vancouver and Montreal as international banking centres, excluding Toronto, the heartland of such an entity in Canada.

Can the Treasurer give us his comments on this proposal if it becomes a reality, and what can or will Ontario do if it becomes a reality?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I am surprised at the statements made by the spokespersons for the government of Canada in this regard. Although this stems from the budget almost a year ago, no concrete action has been taken. We are hoping that wiser heads in Ottawa will prevail and that they will not proceed with it. However, our latest information is that they intend to proceed with the designation of centres other than Toronto.

I agree with the honourable member who asked the question that it is ludicrous, since this is, and we trust will continue to be, the financial centre for Canada. It must be very misleading for people in other parts of the world who participate in the financial work necessary to finance expanding industry and government to find that the government of Canada is establishing two other international centres.

The government takes this matter very seriously indeed. We hope there will not be a continuation of this announced initiative, but if there is we are looking at alternatives that will keep Ontario and Toronto in the forefront of world competition in these financial matters.

HAZARDOUS SPILL

Mrs. Grier: I have a question for the Minister of the Environment. Last November 18,000 gallons of diesel fuel leaked from tanks owned by the National Research Council into a swamp adjacent to the Ottawa airport. Can the minister explain why there was no public indication of this spill? It came to attention only when an oil-soaked beaver was found in the swamp. Is it

the minister's policy now that he only announces the good news and leaves it to the beavers to tell us when something bad has happened?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I cannot believe even the member believes that. I think she was being amusing in this case. From that point of view, I will be happy to investigate this matter that she has appropriately drawn to my attention. It seems I spend a good deal of my time revealing the bad news that exists in terms of the challenges facing us with the environment. I reveal good and bad news when it comes to my attention. I will be happy to investigate the matter the member has brought to my attention.

Ms. Gigantes: At the same time as the minister is looking into the way we receive news about environmental matters in Ottawa, will he look into the question of the operation of that ministry office and find out why, for example, the director of that office said on Sunday the feds should have called him to let him know about what was happening; and he then said, "That's a hell of a lot of oil"? Now the fact is his office had been called by the feds, apparently, but he did not know about it.

Why is this same office telling people that what goes into the Trail Road dump site is the decision of the regional municipality when there are 1,200 drums of industrial waste looking for disposal there that the ministry has not been able to handle? Who is running that office and what is happening there?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: The situation that would exist in relation to what should go into a landfill site, for instance, is the following: while the regional municipality does operate the landfill site, there will be consultation from time to time with the Ministry of the Environment to determine whether any particular substance would meet regulation 309, which deals with substances and categorizes a substance, for instance as to whether it is contained as part of soil, whether it is a liquid being poured straight or what kind of substance, and what the ingredients are within a particular pile of stuff going into a landfill. There would be that kind of consultation.

However, as I indicated to the member for Lakeshore (Mrs. Grier), I will be pleased to investigate this matter. Obviously, she would not have raised it in the House without some degree of concern, and I will look into the matter to see that everything was appropriately done. If it was not, then we will make the appropriate changes.

ACID RAIN

Mr. McGuigan: I have a question of the Minister of the Environment. The people of

southwestern Ontario who suffer crop damage, building damage and damage to their health from acid rain, as well as the people of eastern and northeastern Ontario who suffer lake, forest and health damage, were appalled to learn that the Reagan budget omitted any reference to an acid rain abatement program, and they were outraged by the announcement of an abatement program between Mexico and the United States.

What can we do and what can the minister do to switch channels from the doodling duo singing Irish Eyes are Crying to that old Gene Kelly favourite, Singing in the Acid Rain?

Mr. Gillies: Sing your response.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: The member for Brantford has requested that I sing. I will not acquiesce in that request.

I remind the member for Kent-Elgin that in March of last year, when the Prime Minister and the President concluded their remarks, some were hailing the agreement that was arrived at between the two heads of state as a good agreement as far as acid rain was concerned. However, we in Ontario were, to say the very least, restrained in our enthusiasm. One of the reasons is that we believe we must see an actual acid rain reduction program with a timetable with specific reductions contained in it, with a specific schedule, before we really have a positive impact on Ontario and on Canada in terms of emissions coming over here.

I have consulted with the federal minister on many occasions. I have urged the federal government to press the case with Washington, perhaps in a less conciliatory fashion than was the case last year, because I think, in fairness, even the federal government is concerned now that the kind of agreement it was able to come to with the Americans last year really has not been worth much, because the President has not been able to put the money in the budget or has not been prepared to do so.

PROTECTION FOR HOME BUYERS

Mr. Cousens: I have a question of the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations. On December 17, he made some revisions to the Ontario New Home Warranty Program. Why did he not at that time make a change to protect the consumer immediately after the offer was signed, rather than the way it is now, whereby it is when he takes possession that the new program goes into effect? Why did he not make that change now?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The member will know we tried to address a problem that has been

ongoing. That problem is one that has been addressed and recognized both by the industry and by my ministry. What we did was on the basis of our best advice and the determination of what we thought was best for the consumer, in keeping with the needs and the problems the builders are facing.

Mr. Cousens: What has happened is that the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations has forgotten about the consumer. What he has done is to put the Good Housekeeping seal of approval on a builder's solution to a builder's problem. Right now there is no one to protect the new home buyer when he buys a house, no one to arbitrate and resolve problems that happen between the time he buys and the time he takes possession. Who is there going to be in this province, in his government, to protect the consumer?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The member is mistaken. The Good Housekeeping seal, or whatever he wants to call it—the approval—is not being done by the builders; it is being done by the new home warranty program. The program is there to do exactly that. As the member knows, in the Ryan Homes situation, it stepped in and did the job.

Mr. Cousens: It does not do it now.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Will the honourable member take his seat?

1510

CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE

Mr. Morin-Strom: I have a question for the Premier about the centres of excellence program that was announced on the last day the House sat in December. The call for proposals issued by the Premier's Council clearly stipulated that these research centres will go to consortia of universities and the private sector, based on the strength of the sponsor's current research programs, which must be internationally recognized.

Areas such as northern Ontario without a strong research and technology base do not qualify under the stated criteria. Will the Premier go back to his council and ask it to redraft the criteria so that such technology centres will go to the areas of the greatest need and opportunity to create the jobs we all want to see in this province?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: The member is wrong on several counts. Northern Ontario is not excluded. We have a number of programs designed to meet some of the needs of northern Ontario, and the centres of excellence could possibly qualify, but in this program we are aiming at building world-class critical masses of research capacity.

It is not a regional development program; it is looking at building on the strengths we have.

I am with my friend. I believe we have a number of those strengths in northern Ontario. I am told a number of consortia involving northern universities are competing. I do not know why the member continues to sell the north short.

Mr. Morin-Strom: The Premier must recognize that this province has never established a research university in northern Ontario. The universities in the north have directed undergraduate programs; they do not have graduate programs of the sophistication available at the universities in southern Ontario. At the same time, the private sector has never established major research operations in northern Ontario. Probably the most significant one is Inco's, which has always been located in Sheridan Park in Metropolitan Toronto.

Will the Premier look at the criteria he has established in his call for proposals and ensure that what is promoted are not the areas that currently have the greatest research strength but the areas that do not have research and need it in order to develop the technological base to create the jobs we need? Northern Ontario does not have the research base we want up there, and if it is based on need, which is excluded completely as a criterion, the opportunity would be completely different.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I say respectfully that my honourable friend is wrong. He will have noticed the substantial number of initiatives this government has undertaken, specifically to build Sudbury into a world-class centre in the area of mining and mining research. He should look at the moves that have gone on with Laurentian University, with the Ontario Geological Survey and others to build that critical mass there, and it is going in exactly that direction. We did it several months ago. I am surprised my honourable friend was not aware of it.

The member will be aware of new funding that has gone into the forestry area at Lakehead University, new links that have been established with the University of Toronto and new relationships with the industry as well to build in Thunder Bay a world-class centre of forestry expertise and research associated with that university.

They are not excluded. Exactly the kinds of things he wants to see happen are happening. The communities are delighted. I am surprised my honourable friend was not aware of those initiatives that are now several months old.

REGISTRATION OF DAIRY COWS

Mr. Polsinelli: I have a question for the Minister of Agriculture and Food. It relates to the registration of dairy cows by name as a requirement of the Ontario Dairy Herd Improvement Corp.

It has come to my attention that one client was permitted to record the name Nigger in reference to a heifer in his herd. In this province, we have made great strides in eradicating overt forms of racial discrimination. However, the use of such racially derogatory names to describe cattle is blatantly offensive. Is the minister prepared to communicate this government's policies governing discrimination to the Ontario Dairy Herd Improvement Corp. to ensure its compliance?

Hon. Mr. Riddell: It is my understanding that the Ontario Dairy Herd Improvement Corp., a private concern commonly known as ODHIC, has been made aware of this situation, and I trust that the corporation will deal with this matter in a most appropriate manner.

FARM TAX REDUCTION PROGRAM

Mr. Villeneuve: I have a question of the Minister of Municipal Affairs. The minister will know that the farm property tax rebate program is the largest assistance program this government provides to farmers and that applications are normally mailed in September. Why, as of last Friday, January 9, were some forms still not mailed, according to his ministry? Will he, as the minister, provide special funding to those municipalities that are experiencing cash flow problems because farmers have not been able to pay their entire taxes, thanks to the bungling in his ministry?

Hon. Mr. Grandmaître: I must apologize to the member and to a great number of farmers in this province for a human error, not only in my ministry but also in the Ministry of Government Services. I can assure him and the House that every application has now been mailed. As of today, they are all in the mail, and we have received the co-operation of the post office here in Toronto to make sure these applications are all in the mail.

Thus I must apologize to the member, to this House and to the farmers for a human error.

Mr. Stevenson: I find this a little difficult to understand. This issue was raised in the House on November 24 and again on December 8. The minister told his own Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr. Riddell), as stated in the Hansard for the estimates of the Ministry of Agriculture and

Food, that all the applications were mailed on December 3. His own staff were telling members here that all the mailing was done by December 15, and then, as of last week, they were telling our offices that there were bags of applications still to be mailed. Why has the minister been so totally inept in dealing with this problem?

Hon. Mr. Grandmaître: The member is quite right. I was told—

Interjection.

Hon. Mr. Grandmaître: If he wants to keep his mouth shut and listen, he will get an answer.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Grandmaître: The member is quite right. I was instructed that all applications had been mailed; but if the member wants to ask the acting Minister of Government Services (Mr. Conway) where the original mistake was made, then he will believe that my original answer was the right one.

GRAIN DEFICIENCY PAYMENTS

Mr. Hayes: My question is to the Minister of Agriculture and Food. The minister will agree that the federal government's \$1-billion grain deficiency payment is really not enough to cover the losses experienced by Canadian farmers as a result of the subsidies that the United States and European Community countries pay to their farmers. The Ontario soybean growers' association, though, feels that, to meet its costs, it would need about \$20 million more in deficiency payments for its commodities.

Does the minister feel that the 19 cents a bushel the soybean growers in Ontario are receiving is sufficient to compensate the farmers for the hurt caused by the fall in international grain prices? Is he prepared to pick up the need and supply deficiency payments that will cover the costs where the soybean growers have not received enough to meet their costs because of the falling prices of grain?

1520

Hon. Mr. Riddell: It was the opinion of the federal government and the federal Minister of Agriculture that the Food Security Act did not cause the injury to the soybean growers that it did to the grain growers throughout the country. That is the reason the subsidy amounted to 19 cents a bushel for soybeans, compared with 34 cents a bushel for corn.

I am prepared to put more pressure on the federal government, if indeed the soybean growers feel that is not adequate, that they have been injured to a far greater extent than the

federal government believes they have, but it is a federal government responsibility.

On this side of the House, we are a little sick of having the federal government renege on its responsibility and throw the ball into the court of the provinces. We are going to see that the federal government lives up to its responsibilities.

REPORTS

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Mr. Runciman from the standing committee on public accounts reported the following resolutions:

That supply in the following amount and to defray the expenses of the Office of the Provincial Auditor be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1987:

Administration of the Audit Act and statutory audits program, \$4,771,200;

That supply in the following supplementary amount and to defray the expenses of the Office of the Provincial Auditor be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1987:

Administration of the Audit Act and statutory audits program, \$465,000.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Mr. McCague from the standing committee on general government presented the committee's report and moved its adoption:

The committee begs to report the following bill as amended:

Bill 71, An Act to protect the Public Health and Comfort and the Environment by Prohibiting and Controlling Smoking in Public Places.

Motion agreed to.

Bill ordered for third reading.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Laughren from the standing committee on resources development reported the following resolution:

That supply in the following amounts and to defray the expenses of the Ministry of Energy be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1987:

Ministry administration program, \$7,296,600; policy and planning program, \$4,008,100; energy management and technology

program, \$21,891,400; and Ontario Energy Board program, \$3,054,100.

Mr. Speaker: There are a lot of private conversations taking place. Are they all necessary?

STANDING COMMITTEE ON REGULATIONS AND PRIVATE BILLS

Mr. Callahan from the standing committee on regulations and private bills presented the committee's report.

Mr. Callahan: There were some 705 regulations reviewed by counsel for the committee, a number of which were brought before the committee and considered. I might add that when I was first asked to take on the responsibility of this committee, not too many people around this House knew what it was all about. I hope the report will be helpful in assisting them to know what the committee does do.

INTRODUCTION OF BILL

ELECTION FINANCES AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Nixon moves first reading of Bill 186, An Act to amend the Election Finances Act, 1986.

Motion agreed to.

House in committee of supply.

ESTIMATES, MINISTRY OF HOUSING

Hon. Mr. Curling: I think we are now in committee of the whole. May I step forward?

Mr. Chairman: Do we have the unanimous consent of the House that the minister take a front-row seat?

Agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Curling: The purpose of these debates in the estimates for the Ministry of Housing is to provide this House with a blueprint of the goals that have been set by the ministry for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1987.

The estimates debate deals of necessity with detailed and complex information. In the hours ahead, we will be discussing a broad series of housing programs and the large support system that is necessary to deliver those programs.

Mr. Chairman: Minister, one moment, please. Order.

It is quite unfair to the minister and to the critics who are trying to hear him that private conversations are being carried on. Would members please carry on their private conversations elsewhere. I am not looking at anyone in

particular but perhaps a dozen or 16 people in particular.

Hon. Mr. Curling: I know this is quite important to all the members because they have seen an outstanding year in this government's performance in housing. They also have before them my prepared remarks. However, to put these debates into perspective, I want to begin today's session by establishing a first principle; that is, that all the activities, expenditures and employees of my ministry are dedicated to one essential and compelling goal: to provide the people of this province with decent and affordable housing.

From the first dawn of human settlement, shelter has been a basic human need and a basic human right. The society that fails to provide shelter for every single one of its members is a society that has failed in its most essential responsibility.

1530

Our government may achieve great things. We may build great cities, lay down highways, bridges and airports, increase trade, enhance culture and develop high technology; yet if we fail to provide shelter, decent and affordable housing for the people of this province, we will have failed as a government and as legislators.

I am proud of my ministry's achievements in the past year: 19,000 new rental units that would not have been committed without our efforts; creating unprecedented communication and co-operation between landlords and tenants; a sensitive system of rent review unequalled by any other in North America; and a series of important initiatives to assist those in compelling need of assistance.

Yet we have only begun to address this pressing need for housing that exists through every corner of this province. Each member of this Legislature campaigned on a promise truly to serve the people of Ontario, to make this a province where people with genuine needs would be heard and answered. As we sit in this comfortable chamber, it is too easy to forget there are tens of thousands of people in Ontario whose needs are not being heard and not being answered, that some still go to bed hungry in Ontario, that too many still search for work and do not find it and that many are without a decent place to live. It is too easy to forget former psychiatric patients, battered women with young children, underage parents, the homeless and all the other dispossessed of our society, who ask only dignity and a place to make their home.

As a government, we have made an important beginning to help these people. There is still much to be done. As a government, we must renew our determination to direct the vast natural wealth of Ontario in ways that will ensure every citizen is allowed the dignity and security he deserves.

In this fiscal year, the Ministry of Housing is working with dedication and determination to meet its responsibilities in this regard. These estimates reflect that effort. This ministry was established in June 1985. The government, recognizing the fundamental importance of housing in Ontario, recreated a separate ministry whose sole responsibility would be the provision and maintenance of housing in this province.

When I came to the Ministry of Housing, I was determined to evaluate what was being done to meet these responsibilities. More important, we were determined to ensure that what would be done in the future would be comprehensive, co-ordinated and complementary to the public's need.

My first objective was to meet with all parts of the housing industry and with all those impacted on by past programs. Those are tenants, low-income singles and families, existing participants in socially assisted housing, builders, landlords, financial institutions and municipal and regional officials.

The first and most startling result of this process was the discovery that many, indeed most, of these individuals and groups had never before met with those responsible for policy and program development and for the delivery of our programs.

The second discovery I made was that while there are many groups and individuals with diverse interests in this area, almost without exception they are prepared and willing to work towards solutions that would be reasonable and fair to all. That dialogue, which involved all who were interested in housing, took several months of meetings across Ontario. The result was our assured housing for Ontario strategy. This is an initiative of which we in the ministry are extremely proud. It sets out for the first time in this province a clear, long-range strategy that over time should ensure that all Ontarians become and remain the best-housed citizens in North America.

When I introduced our assured housing strategy on December 16, 1985, I commented on what we were trying to achieve. It is important to reiterate those comments. I do this because in the debates that occur in this House, all of us from

time to time become so involved in specific details that we lose sight of the overall objective and what our long-term goals are all about.

I would like to emphasize again that a priority of this ministry is to come to grips with the very crucial issues we face in housing. As a result, in announcing the assured housing strategy, I said we were initiating a major change in direction and attitude towards housing in Ontario. I stressed that this change was designed to accomplish many objectives, including the need to bring certainty back to all elements of the housing market. I said we would move forcefully to protect tenants and provide them with long-term certainty, and move assertively to give confidence to landlords and the building industry. In short, we would provide a housing policy that would be fair and just for all.

Our goal is to put in place a balanced system to ensure that all Ontario residents have access to adequate housing at reasonable cost, now and in the future, one that recognizes the valid work of the building industry and its investors.

I stated that we proposed to achieve our goal through a program based on five main elements: (1) a fair and effective system to protect the rights of tenants; (2) a policy of equitable treatment for owners of rental property in a climate of increased confidence, another very important point; (3) prompt measures to meet essential housing needs, with the government assuming an active role; (4) a commitment to a dynamic and efficient building industry that will continue to be a major source of employment in Ontario; and (5) an era of improved co-operation and conciliation among governments, producers and consumers of housing throughout Ontario.

I said we would meet those challenges by increasing housing supply, developing a new rent review system, initiating a building industry strategy that would promote long-range and secure employment and, finally, using government-owned lands more effectively for housing.

1540

I indicated the actual goals we had set for ourselves. They are ambitious but vitally necessary. Over the next five years, I said we wanted to produce 43,000 rental units, including 32,000 social housing units. We targeted a goal under which the private sector would immediately build a further 5,000 units of modest rental housing and under which we would encourage creation of a further 6,000 affordable units through conversions from other uses.

This government moved decisively with an act to halt indiscriminate conversions, demolitions, luxury renovations and other such measures. We did this because there was an urgent need to preserve the existing supply of affordable rental housing in many areas of our province and to protect the security of tenants in that kind of accommodation. At the same time, my colleague the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Grand-maitre) indicated his concern about these activities, which had contributed to the severe depletion of affordable rental housing in this province, particularly in our larger urban centres. We promised to reform the rent review system, to provide fair and just treatment for tenants and landlords and to get real movement on rental construction in this province.

I reported that a new atmosphere of trust and confidence was developing and that a Rent Review Advisory Committee had been established, consisting of equal representation of both landlords and tenants. I said I would introduce new legislation for a much more effective system of rent review, which would fundamentally restructure the operations of the Residential Tenancy Commission.

I stated that new legislation would fulfil our commitment to extend the review process to virtually all rental housing in the province and establish a ceiling of four per cent on annual rent increases, retroactive to August 1, 1985. I said that thereafter the guideline would be set annually at a rate linked to the rate of inflation. More important, I said clearly that the four per cent guideline would be in place for all 1986. That commitment was met.

To achieve our goals, I indicated that a combination of legislative initiatives and direct government action would be required. To support our efforts, the government would commit more than \$500 million during the next five years to a variety of measures, ranging from help in the production and upgrading of rental housing to funding of housing alternatives for seniors.

As members may be aware, the delivery of nonprofit housing is now the responsibility of the provincial government. This transition of responsibilities from the federal to the provincial government during the past year, as well as the increase in social housing activity, has brought great benefits to Ontario. One indication of our commitment to social housing was the federal-provincial agreement signed almost a year ago.

Under the previous arrangement with the federal government, Ontario picked up less than 10 per cent of the cost for municipal nonprofit

housing. Now we are responsible for delivering the private nonprofit and co-operative programs, as well as the municipal nonprofit program, and because of the new funding formula we will be contributing about 50 per cent of each dollar spent on subsidizing social housing.

The nonprofit program emphasizes the importance of directing most of the housing assistance to households that need it. Targeting is a key feature of the program. For households with certain income limitations that cannot find adequate suitable rental accommodation in the community without spending more than 30 per cent of their incomes on rent, the subsidies are shared 60-40 between the federal and provincial governments.

However, subsidies required to support other rent-geared-to-income units, as well as market-rent units, are paid by the province alone. As I said, the bottom line is that the total subsidies now are split pretty evenly between Ontario and the government of Canada. Think how much more we could address if we had the kind of support in subsidies that the federal government had given to the province before.

Our nonprofit housing activities are not confined to joint arrangements with the federal government. Earlier this month, we advertised for nonprofit sponsors to develop housing units under a special initiative that will be funded solely by the province. The special allocation of 3,000 units is aimed at a broad range of groups but particular emphasis will be placed on serving the neediest. I am talking about physically, developmentally or psychiatrically handicapped persons, battered women, homeless people and other socially disadvantaged persons. I urge the members to keep this in mind in times to come when they have questions in the House about what we are doing about the homeless.

Apart from the Ministry of Housing, the ministries of Health and Community and Social Services are involved in this initiative. We will be working together to help disadvantaged people throughout Ontario who require a combination of support care services and housing. We have asked interested community groups and nonprofit organizations to attend orientation sessions on the development of housing with support care services. Meetings will be held next month at each of the six Ministry of Housing regional offices.

Preliminary applications indicating an intent to develop housing projects with support services must be submitted by March 31, 1987. Up to 1,000 of the 3,000 units will be selected from

applications for housing with support services that have already been submitted to the ministry. This will save a tremendous amount of time in getting them into the system. This special provincial allocation is yet another example of this government's sensitivity towards the most disadvantaged in our society. I thank all those involved for the co-operation they have shown in dealing with the transition period.

Our comprehensive policy firmly establishes the provision of housing as one of the highest priorities of this government. It is our firm belief that decent affordable housing is achievable for all Ontarians and that equitable treatment is the right of all, whether tenant, landlord, home buyer or builder.

We have set a new course in open dialogue and made a new commitment to the people of this province. We are beginning a new era of assured housing for the people of Ontario. This is what these estimates are all about: a new, clear and consistent commitment to all Ontarians. That is the context in which I hope the debate will proceed as we go along.

Mr. Gordon: I say to the minister that those of us on this side of the House find it passing strange he would tell us today that the provision of housing in Ontario is one of his highest priorities. We on this side have watched for the past two years he has been the minister and we have seen an excessive amount of time and energy spent on what can be called, quite clearly, a rent review bill. That is what the ministry calls it and that is exactly what it is.

1550

The ministry spent almost two years in bringing that bill to the House. It spent almost two years in circulating it throughout the province and yet the minister tells us today that his highest priority as Minister of Housing is to create more housing in the province. Who is he kidding? I was at those committee meetings as we went across the province. I heard him practically beg developers to say that by having a new type of rent formula in Ontario there would be more building by the private sector in the province. Time and time again I listened to those developers as they told him they could not make that kind of a promise. Yet here and now in this House he is telling us his highest priority, the priority of his ministry, is to provide housing in Ontario.

Let us look at the facts. First of all, despite what the minister says, that adequate and affordable housing is a priority of his ministry, all we have to do is look at the latest statistical

facts concerning the vacancy rates in some of the major communities, and I would like to do that at this time to put it on the record. In case there are any illusions about how much housing he has created in the past two years, let us take a look at those rates.

First, I want to refer to Metro Toronto, where we heard in this House earlier today that a 54-year-old man passed away, frozen in the cold. Much of this has to come from the fact that there is so little housing available in the province at present.

I would like the minister to pay careful heed to this. The vacancy rate in Metro Toronto right now it is 0.2; Barrie, 0.4; Brantford, 0.4; Chatham, 0.1; Cornwall, 0.9; Guelph, 0.4; Hamilton, 0.5; Sudbury, 0.7. We could go on and on. It is a litany of disgrace for this minister and his ministry that in the past two years he has spent his time developing and working on a rent review bill and he did not do much about housing. If he had done something about housing, I would not be reading out these kinds of statistics.

The minister cannot get away from the facts. His ministry has not been able to come up to the mark when it comes to providing more housing in this province. As a matter of fact, it is really interesting that for some time he has been touting the idea that perhaps some housing would be created by the private sector at the high end.

When we talk about the high end we are referring to the idea that the private sector would build apartment units that would be rented for \$800 or \$900 or more a month and that in 10, 15 or perhaps even 20 years from now this would become the new affordable housing that the people of Ontario who were renters in middle-income or lower-income groups would be able to move into.

Quite simply, it is obvious that is not going to provide any real housing for those who need it in Ontario. Yet this is one area that he as the minister pointed out to us at one time or another in this House as being an area we could look to for housing in the future.

I would like to point out to the minister that about one third of the housing in this province is occupied by renters. At the present time, 200,000 people in Ontario are looking for, want and need affordable and suitable housing that will allow them to live in dignity. We do not see the housing that those 200,000 people need in the vacancy rates I just read out. These are the facts, and they speak for themselves. The facts are that the minister and his ministry have been a dismal

failure when it comes to providing more housing in the rental area for people in Ontario.

In Ontario right now, 40,000 people require social housing. The minister is promising those 40,000 people that some time over the next five years some of them are going to be able to find some of that social housing. The minister is not even meeting the backlog of need and demand that exists in this province. At the rate the minister is going, he is never going to achieve the housing that is required by our people.

I think back to the public relations effort that the ministry put into talking about Bill 51, and about how the minister had the gall to hold a party in the office of the Premier (Mr. Peterson) to celebrate bringing in a rent review bill that did nothing; it did not build one single apartment unit for those who need it. He spent two years doing that but still calls himself the Minister of Housing. I cannot let him get away with that.

We talked about Bill 51 in this House some time ago. As I pointed out at that time, no one here would have objected to the rent registry that was part of that bill. We would be the first to say that this is a way to ensure that when people go to rent a unit they know the rent they should be paying. It creates a fair system. No one would deny that costs-no-longer-borne, which was also a feature of Bill 51, is required so that renters do not continue to pay for a roof long after it has been paid for. No one argued with these things. This House would have passed those measures if they had been introduced in bill form almost two years ago.

What has the minister really done for housing in Ontario? That is what I would like to know. We have heard a lot of promises. We have heard a lot of high-faluting words, as we say in the north. In his estimates speech the minister said, "The government, recognizing the fundamental importance of housing in Ontario, re-created a separate ministry whose sole responsibility would be the provision and maintenance of housing in the province." Imagine; the government put together a ministry whose sole purpose was going to be the provision and maintenance of housing in Ontario.

What did that ministry do? It spent two years putting together a rent review bill and ignored the tremendous crisis that we have in Ontario at the present time: the crisis of a lack of housing.

I would like to point out to the minister something that was written recently in one of our local newspapers in the Sudbury region. This editorial came after the minister's visit to Sudbury. I saw a picture of him in the Sudbury

Star with a dart in one hand. A lady I know very well, a Mrs. Tyerrel, who is in her 90s, a very gracious person who has contributed a great deal to the wellbeing of the Sudbury region, is showing him how to play darts and how to score a bull's-eye. The minister is far from scoring a bull's-eye when it comes to the provision of housing in this province.

1600

I would like to read to him an editorial about housing that appeared in one of our local papers. As the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) knows, I always quote sources from Sudbury because they are usually correct and up front. As the Minister of the Environment also knows, the people of Sudbury are very up front about their feelings and their views and do not hesitate to point out what needs to be changed.

I will read the minister this editorial because I think he will find it edifying.

"A survey of rental housing units in Sudbury done by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp. shows that Sudbury has one of the lowest vacancy rates in Canada, surpassed only by booming metropolitan areas in southern Ontario. In Sudbury the vacancy rate stands at 0.7 per cent, which favours the landlord by more than four times the ideal rate, according to CMHC.

"It means that people looking for affordable housing in a certain location must often settle for available housing in any place they can find. The tight rental housing market in Sudbury is evident when in the past year 110 rental units were constructed and all were quickly rented. In the Sudbury region there are 5,270 privately owned rental units in buildings with more than six units. The vacancy rate of 0.7 per cent tallied in October means there would be only 36 vacancies for an apartment hunter to choose from.

"Low vacancy rates for rental units are consistent throughout the province. The average across the province is 0.6 per cent, with the scales being tipped by the virtually nonexistent vacancies in southern Ontario. That vacancy rate is much lower than the average for all Canada. There appears to be an anomaly of low vacancy rates in Sudbury and the rest of Ontario which is not matched in many other places in Canada. In the country, only nine other cities match or are lower than Sudbury's low vacancy rate, and seven of those cities are located in Ontario."

What is particularly apt about this editorial, and it is the point of what I have been saying in this introduction to the estimates, is this quote from the editor of *Northern Life*. He says: "Sudbury shares its problem of affordable rental

accommodation with the rest of the province. Perhaps provincial policy on housing should be investigated more thoroughly to see where the problem lies."

That is exactly the point. The minister has had two years to investigate and to come up with new policies to provide more housing in this province. I have to say that he and his ministry have failed. They have not come up with the kind of housing that is needed in this province. We will be glad to talk during estimates about statistics. We expect the minister will send his staff scurrying to come up with statistics about the kinds of things he is trying to do, but I put it to the minister on the following basis.

We on this side of the House are aware that the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) in his first budget introduced higher personal income taxes for Ontario citizens. We are also aware of the other tax grabs he made at that time. As a matter of fact, I have to deem those tax grabs as avaricious. Right now, that minister has about \$2 billion in the kitty, and these dollars could go towards building more housing in this province, towards providing more social housing in this province. That is the kind of thing we want him to do, and I will have more to say about that as the estimates go along.

Mr. Reville: The minister started his remarks by indicating that he had the honour of undertaking the defence of the estimates. I suppose the estimates are defensible, but it really depends on what the yardsticks are. They are eminently defensible if the yardstick is the effort of the Ministry of Housing of the previous government. There is no question this ministry and this government are doing better than the half of the ministry that existed under the previous government. I used to spend a good part of my life in heated debate with the then Minister of Housing, the member for Ottawa South (Mr. Bennett), who is not in the House, nor has he been in the House, perhaps because he is so embarrassed by the record of the ministry when he was the minister.

On the other hand, the estimates are not defensible at all if the effort of the Ministry of Housing is compared to the need for housing in the province. It strikes me as absurd for a Minister of Housing to spend so many pages congratulating himself and his ministry on the effort when the position of Ontario relative to the other provinces in Canada has not changed since the Liberal government took office. It continues to be ahead of only the four maritime provinces, and that is the position this province occupied

when the Liberal government took office. That is a shocking situation, particularly given some of the realities of housing in Ontario.

The vacancy rates are the lowest in the country, and yet the economy is the most buoyant. The housing prices are the highest in the country, which creates even more pressure on those who are not lucky enough to have tons of money so that they can compete in the housing market. I do not know whether the minister is familiar with these figures. At some point during these estimates I can provide him with a copy so that he will have the benefit of the figures and will then pause to reflect on how much more effort this government has to deliver.

However, given that we have a situation where the total expenditures of the Ministry of Housing are but 1.09 per cent of provincial expenditures, it is clear that housing does not have the kind of priority the government would have us believe. In spite of all the fine speeches about the government's interest in assuring that everybody has decent, affordable housing, when it comes down to dividing up the financial pie in the province, housing continues to get a tiny sliver.

Because the minister is content to repeat things he has often said before, I am going to take the liberty of repeating some things I have said before.

It strikes me, and it has struck me for some time, that a housing policy has to have three major pieces. One is protecting the existing housing stock to make sure it continues to be affordable, to make sure it continues to be habitable and to make sure it does not turn into something else, such as a parking lot. It is my submission that the government's efforts in this regard have not been adequate. We will probably talk more about that.

1610

Bill 11 was designed to protect the existing housing stock. I wonder whether the minister feels it protects it adequately. Is there information, for instance, to indicate what has happened to applications for conversion, demolition, etc.? Are there policy deficits even within the existing policy; and how are we doing in developing a permanent policy to replace Bill 11 when it runs out of steam not very long from now, in 1988?

The second major piece of housing policy has to do with consumer protection. How do you make sure that people in housing are protected from unconscionable rent increases? How do you ensure that they get the maintenance and repair to which they are entitled and for which they have paid? The government's response to that problem

has been Bill 51. A great deal of time has been spent on Bill 51. It is too bad the time that was spent did not produce a better bill.

The third part of the housing policy has to do with delivering new supply. A part of the minister's presentation today was spent talking about initiatives to deliver new supply. While those initiatives are greater than any we have seen from governments in this province in recent years, they are clearly inadequate to meet the need that exists today. Earlier today we had already referred to the fact that people are homeless and do freeze in the winter in our province. In a province as wealthy as ours, with the resources our province has, it is inexcusable that even one person should freeze to death because access to housing is impossible. Some work has been done, and more will be said as we go along about the supply program that is being delivered by the Ministry of Housing.

The minister started off by saying the estimates were a sort of blueprint of the goals and objectives of the Ministry of Housing. In fact, we have heard much about what the objectives of the Ministry of Housing are. They are laudable objectives and are obvious objectives. The real question is how well are those objectives being met. It is the contention of the New Democratic Party that the objectives are not being met at all well.

Some useful policy changes have been brought forward. I think of the policy change with respect to Ontario Housing whereby 16-year-old and 17-year-old parents are now eligible for housing. Clearly, that is a policy change the New Democratic Party welcomes. It is astounding to us that it was ever necessary to make a change such as that. Likewise, the change that was made with respect to people who are on the guaranteed annual income system for the disabled pensions by reason of a mental handicap, who were previously ineligible for housing: that was changed in the dying days of the Conservative government. Again, it is astounding that there had been a policy that prevented people with that kind of disability from getting housing.

The problem, however, is not solved merely by making someone eligible for housing. I do not want the minister to turn his back on that policy change, but he has achieved a situation in which the waiting list for Ontario Housing will grow longer, rather than shorter, because he has increased the number of people who are eligible to join the waiting list.

I have always had a lot of difficulty with the notion that to get housing, you have to be able to

stand before an application taker with a label stuck on yourself that says you are a battered wife or a 16-year-old mother or have one leg or some mental disability. This is the labelling approach to the provision of housing. The federal government, in its shocking withdrawal from the provision of affordable housing, pioneered this offensive notion of worst first, as though it were somehow possible to decide that some people need housing and some others do not.

One of the problems with the worst-first approach, and it is an approach I hear echoed in the minister's remarks and it worries me a great deal, is that quite often the supply is managed so that it is not only worst first but also worst last. A large number of people who require housing do not ever become eligible, or if they become eligible they do not advance to the head of the line.

One of the other problems that occurs is that sometimes particular labels become more attractive in the minds of policy makers, and then they jump the queue. One year, ex-psychiatric patients may be the cause célèbre; next year, it may be battered parents. Therefore, we have reciprocal leapfrog, which is only a device to hand out to a very large number of people a very small number of units. The way we manage to do that kind of loaves-and-fishes routine is to make sure that most of the people waiting for housing are not really eligible at all. That is a situation that has to change.

In spite of the rhetoric of the Minister of Housing, I wonder whether it is the case in Ontario that every citizen has a right to housing. Clearly, everybody does not have housing, and the supply program the minister has advanced and announced for the next five years is not going to deliver the housing that is needed.

It is interesting to try to understand the way the Ministry of Housing has gone about allocating the 16,000 units in this year's allocation. I am leaving aside the 3,000 units for the moment. In a number of places, the allocations will not leave us in a position that deals at all with the vacancy rates we experienced before the allocation.

Let me go at that again, because I know it is an astounding proposition. In the Metro Toronto area, the vacancy rate in October 1986 was 0.1 per cent. Through various programs of the Ministry of Housing, such as Renterprise, convert to rent and nonprofit, about 4,200 additional units are expected to appear in Metro Toronto in the next year. Regrettably, the total number of units will be less than the annual absorption rate in Metro. After all the sod-

turning by the minister, the vacancy rate in a year's time will be less than the annual absorption rate in Metro.

Thus, after all the sod turning by the minister, the vacancy rate in a year's time will not be 0.1 per cent but zero per cent, which makes one wonder what the Ministry of Housing is going on about. The same situation occurs in Ottawa-Carleton, where the vacancy rate will drop from 2.4 per cent to 1.3 per cent, in spite of the hoped-for construction of 3,628 units. Clearly, the minister's efforts are falling far short of the mark.

1620

There have been some fairly blinding achievements by the Ministry of Housing which were touched on earlier in the minister's remarks. What is called the startling process, the discovery that the Ministry of Housing made on page 4, is that people know things. That was followed by another startling discovery: that people are reasonable. The ministry has to come up with something more amazing than that in terms of a housing policy. The proposition that people know things and that people are reasonable are things I am sure the minister knew before he came here.

I do not doubt the minister feels there has been a major change in direction and attitude in Ontario. There is a vast difference of opinion, though, about whether the major change is major enough. It is our view that it is not major enough and that until the supply program is vastly increased, no one in this Legislature should be content with the effort that is going on in housing in the province.

For instance, as we get to specific votes, it will be interesting to hear more about how well we are doing at using government-owned lands more effectively for housing. I am not aware that the use of government-owned lands for housing has been particularly effective. It will also be interesting to hear from the minister how many of the 32,000 social housing units hoped for over the next five years will be rent-geared-to-income units and what the rent levels of the balance will be. It will be interesting to know as well how the minister's goal of 5,000 units of modest rental housing will be delivered by the private sector and how the 6,000 affordable units through conversion from other uses will be achieved.

The minister has spoken to us about the importance of targeting. There is no question that targeting is important; in fact, it is absurd to deliver housing that is not affordable for those who require it. We know that the way a number

of the social housing programs operate is that the market rents, or economic rents as they are called, are often very high. That is a function of the housing market.

For instance, a Renterprise project I was examining the other day, one that I am very interested in seeing go ahead, generates a rent of more than \$1,100 a month for a three-bedroom apartment on Bathurst Quay. It would require a family income of about \$45,000 a year to handle the rent. I understand the co-op federation that is delivering the project is hoping to get 40 per cent of the units as rent geared to income and will be allocating about 12 units to Jessie's, an agency that delivers housing to young mothers.

Both of these hopes by the Co-operative Housing Federation of Toronto are ones I share. I hope that happens as well, and I use this opportunity to remind the minister that it would be a great idea if both these aspects of the project were realized. Notwithstanding that, I think this leaves us with about 70 units in that project. It will be quite expensive but perhaps a little less expensive than what one would find in the private rental market. Certainly, we are glad of any rental units, but are they truly affordable units? We are going to have to struggle with that, and I know it is something the minister is prepared to struggle with.

The minister mentioned it is too easy to forget that in Ontario we have people who go to bed hungry. I do not forget that. I do not find that easy to forget at all. In fact, I find it horrifying to be reminded of that every day. Much of the reason people go to bed hungry is that they have to make a choice between paying rent or buying food. That is a choice no one should be forced to make in our society. It does not make sense to me that anybody should have to make a choice between paying rent and putting food on the table. A lot of the hunger in Ontario is related to the lack of affordable housing. There is no question in my mind that this is the case. The matter is being brought forcefully to the attention of the social assistance review group and will be again brought forcefully to its attention when I join members of the New Democratic Party at the hearing on January 23, I believe.

Ex-psychiatric patients often lose their "ex." Because of the lack of affordable housing, they end up back in the psychiatric hospital. It is my view, one I believe in very strongly, one I have shared many times with anybody who cared to listen and one I shared with the social assistance review group when I went to speak about the plight of people with psychiatric problems, that

the lack of affordable housing contributes to recidivism.

People who have had a period of hospitalization are very likely to have another period of hospitalization because, when they are discharged from hospital, there is no reasonable place for them to live. In the absence of a decent affordable place to live, people are going to encounter all sorts of problems. The evidence is clear that people who are discharged from hospital and who do not have a good housing situation very often end up back in the hospital. This is a terrible human and economic cost we are currently bearing. It is a cost we could avoid paying, both in human and economic terms, if there were a reasonable housing circumstance waiting for people when they are discharged from hospital.

I realize that when we start talking about ex-psychiatric patients or people who have psychiatric problems we are getting into a situation where we start to cut across ministries. We have to deal with the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Community and Social Services as well as the Ministry of Housing. I very much hope the Minister of Housing will be prepared to be the lead minister in this regard. For too long we have heard the lame excuse, "It is not my responsibility," once the Minister of Health has seen a patient beyond the doors of the Queen Street Mental Health Centre.

One former Minister of Health, the member for Don Mills (Mr. Timbrell), with whom I used to discuss this matter and who I was glad to see was in the Legislature today and who must read the newspapers as well as I, once said, "Do you expect me to put a leash on people after they get out of hospital?" Obviously no one wants to put a leash on anyone, but on the other hand there is no point in dumping somebody out of a back ward on to a back street or into a doughnut shop. That is what happens today.

I will conclude my remarks at this point and we can probably proceed to the votes, if that is your pleasure, Mr. Chairman, unless the minister would like to withdraw his previous remarks and start again.

1630

Hon. Mr. Curling: What previous remarks?

Mr. Reville: I have given the minister all these good suggestions. He can have them for nothing.

Hon. Mr. Curling: Is the member talking about my withdrawing some remarks?

Mr. Reville: I thought the minister might want to reconsider his position and make a new

statement incorporating any of the remarks I have made that he wishes.

Hon. Mr. Curling: The remarks I made were quite calculated, thought through and researched. I did not pull those remarks out of the air or out of a hat, so I stand by them.

The Deputy Chairman: Do you plan to vote item by item or to discuss vote 1901 as a whole?

Mr. Gordon: We can start off by talking about vote 1901.

The Deputy Chairman: Yes, but item by item or all the items at the same time? Would you like to have a vote, for instance, after item 1 on main office or would you like to go—

Mr. Gordon: Item by item.

The Deputy Chairman: Is that the wish of everyone?

Mr. Reville: If my friend the member for Sudbury (Mr. Gordon) is amenable to having a general discussion about each vote, if there are items of particular interest to anybody in the Legislature they can be dealt with. For instance, we could do vote 1901 and chat all we want to about ministry administration and if the member wants to talk about any specific lines, I will be delighted. Why do we not do it vote by vote? Is that agreeable?

The Deputy Chairman: Is that agreeable to everyone?

Mr. Gordon: Mr. Chairman, as Housing critic for my party, in case you have not noticed, in reply to the member for Riverdale (Mr. Reville), who is Housing critic for the New Democratic Party, that is a fair assumption on his part.

On vote 1901, ministry administration:

Hon. Mr. Curling: Mr. Chairman, before we get into that, I hope you will allow me the privilege of making some comments on vote 1901, the first vote, on administration.

The Deputy Chairman: Go ahead.

Hon. Mr. Curling: The government of Ontario established the Ministry of Housing as a separate entity in June 1985. That decision was part of a broader recognition by this government that housing issues needed the full-time commitment of a minister and staff. The government also recognized that the municipalities also needed a full-time minister and staff.

In implementing this separation, we looked seriously at costs and benefits and made the decision not to duplicate ministry operations unless absolutely necessary. We felt, and I believe experience has proved us correct, that

substantial savings in administrative costs could be realized if certain elements of our operations remained unchanged and continued to serve both the Ministry of Housing and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs.

Both this ministry and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs have been able to carry on with their mandates efficiently and effectively while sharing common corporate resources such as communications and information services, financial services, operations review and audit services, human resources services and information processing services, except for the Municipal Affairs wing. Our legal service has designated legal staff for planning the Municipal Affairs wing with administration by Housing and the services of the corporate secretary.

Let me point out that both this ministry and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs have been able to carry on their respective tasks while taking on responsibility for new tasks. In the case of the Ministry of Housing, I would include responsibility for rent review, for the expanding mandate of the buildings branch and the building industrial strategy, and for the expanded delivery of social housing.

Recognizing the efficient way the government has been able to carry on while sharing these fundamental and important administrative services, I must at this point acknowledge a very big debt to the staff within those service areas for their dedication in helping this process succeed. It is only with the commitment of senior staff that such initiatives can be implemented. If the deputy minister, the assistant deputy ministers, the executive directors and so on provide a corporate overview of operations, then the use of shared services can indeed succeed.

I and my associate the Minister of Municipal Affairs have been extremely fortunate in working with staff who see and are committed to that corporate view of government and who are concerned for taxpayers' dollars. This truly enables the concept of shared services to succeed.

The forward thinking and dedication of ministry staff are nowhere better illustrated than within the ministry's management services branch and the work it has undertaken to ensure that we have the best management information services available to meet our ever more complex operations. In fact, as the Treasurer pointed out in his budget of last May, it is one of the areas where this government is prepared to move ahead rapidly. It is a great compliment to our staff and assistants, who have done very well.

At that time, the Treasurer said: "As the overall business of government has grown increasingly complex, so have the management information requirements. Management of the central budget plan and program performance requires timely, accurate and complete information. The financial information system of the province will be supplemented to reflect current management information needs."

More gratifying from my perspective was the fact that the Treasurer recognized the work done by the Ministry of Housing, which agreed to undertake the lead role in developing the system applications at the line ministry level.

The decade of the 1980s has seen tremendous growth in user-oriented data processing within both the Ministry of Housing and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs. This phenomenon is evidenced by the growing number of mainframe users and microcomputing work stations. As a result, both technology and user demand are forcing the outward spread of technology from the corporate computer centre to line departments.

The concern of senior management is to control this process to ensure that data required at the corporate level do not become totally fragmented and that the benefits of such elements as the development of new applications, software, reduced programming time, lower maintenance costs and better access to corporate ministry information are fully realized.

1640

Let me outline now the proposed financial management system, using the operations of the Ontario Housing Corp. as an example. The Ontario Housing Corp. administers an assisted rental housing portfolio of approximately 84,000 units. The day-to-day property management operations of OHC-owned housing are carried out by 58 local housing authorities. The OHC had a 1986 gross budget of approximately \$450 million and a total cash flow of approximately \$800 million.

During the past 10 years, OHC has moved from direct ownership of rent-geared-to-income housing to the funding of community-based housing delivery organizations. It has also restricted its own involvement to approving proposed new projects and annual operating budgets and to monitoring performance.

The municipal nonprofit, private nonprofit and co-operative housing programs are examples of community-level, municipal and private sector housing delivery organizations and currently represent a total of 12,000 units. The recently

announced nonprofit housing program will bring an additional 32,000 social housing units on stream during the next five years at a cost of \$200 million.

With regard to the 84,000 OHC-owned units, OHC has moved towards a corporate strategy of decentralizing accountability to its local housing authorities as they become increasingly more capable with regard to budgeting, operational planning, purchasing of supplies and services and contract administration.

For the record, because I think my sequence of order has gone, I will go to—I know the member for Sudbury is paying much attention and that is why I thought I would pause.

Mr. Gordon: Did you lose your place?

Hon. Mr. Curling: Exactly.

Mr. Gordon: You were just trying to get my attention.

Hon. Mr. Curling: I know I have the member's undivided attention.

Mr. Gordon: Undivided.

Hon. Mr. Curling: OHC has also further decentralized its program support function in the areas of property management, social-housing program delivery and technical support to six regional housing program offices to effect a one-window support approach at the community level. As a result of this strategy, an efficient financial reporting system with the necessary financial modelling capability has become of the utmost importance to OHC senior management.

The research already completed and the process put in place offer great potential to all government operations and it is for that reason this ministry is taking the lead in developing applications at the line ministry level. Another of the major components of this information processing activity is the provision of a computer processing facility that will ensure our best return on investment. To this end, the ministry undertook a comprehensive computer service tender with the objectives of controlling costs, improving customer service, providing for growth in demand and providing for disaster recovery.

The tender resulted in a new computer service arrangement that has seen the installation of a medium-sized computer in the head office premises. It is more cost-effective and is easier to use than that previously provided. Indeed, our new service contract has already yielded savings of well over \$1 million in this fiscal year and we will continue to reap savings in years to come.

While for many, this type of administrative activity is not a glamour issue, as I can see by the

interest shown here by the critic, when one compares program delivery as shown inside—

Mr. Gordon: I am following it line by line.

Hon. Mr. Curling: I know the member is, but his efforts and enthusiasm picked up when we came to program delivery. It is nevertheless an excellent example of the ministry's commitment to efficient and effective internal management of our resources and affairs.

More and more it is recognized that excellence of program delivery is in direct proportion to the excellence of the administrative services that support it. Those services support the strategic and operational goals of the government. For example, the rent registry soon to be in operation in this province would be almost unattainable without the availability and use of contemporary computer technology.

I have spent some time on new directions we have taken with regard to technology and equipment. As I said earlier, without dedicated staff and managers, little of value would be accomplished. That cannot be overemphasized.

I would like now to refer to initiatives we have implemented with relation to human resources. During the past 11 years, the ministry has supported an affirmative action program. Today, we are moving to an employment equity program, which will continue its focus on women but will also broaden its mandate to include visible minorities, disabled persons, native people and francophones. During the next few months, we will be seeking input from our staff, ideas and suggestions that will assist in the development process. We will also be looking at other areas where programs are in operation. This ministry is committed to ensuring there are no barriers—physical, organizational or attitudinal—to impede the career growth of all people or to bring new people into the ministry.

In 1987, the local housing authorities will begin a formal employment equity program, setting out their plans and reporting levels. The ministry has also initiated executive skills workshops, general management workshops, getting-ahead seminars and several other one-day courses with more than 500 women from the Ministry of Housing and other ministries in attendance.

There are two volunteer committees working to assist women in the ministry: the employment equity volunteers, who have arranged noon-hour sessions at 777 Bay Street, and the publications committee, which prints a quarterly news bulletin called *News of Women* or *N.O.W.* These committees provide developmental experience

for the members as well as benefits for other women in the ministry.

In 1987-88, we will continue our skills development in working with women. More important, we will develop programs to ensure that the composition of our staff reflects the community in which we live.

A growing issue in major urban centres of Ontario, and an issue that falls under this vote, is the loss of housing stock previously occupied by roomers and boarders. While the provision for hostel-type accommodation under the convert-to-rent program should be of some assistance in this connection, the whole question of both rights and supply for these people needs to be addressed.

1650

On March 27 last, I announced the establishment of a provincial task force to address the need for improved regulations to protect roomers, boarders and lodgers and to recommend ways to increase the supply of affordable housing for low-income single individuals. That task force is headed by Dale Bairstow, who has conducted housing studies in several provinces and just recently was a principal in a major study of singles' housing for New York City.

The mandate of the task force is to develop recommendations with respect to an adequate supply of affordable, accessible accommodation for low-income single individuals, protection for occupants of single-room accommodation, the assurance of adequate standards, a positive response to specific areas of need wherever they occur in Ontario and the recognition of the rights and requirements of landlords of this form of housing.

I am sure members will agree that the tasks at hand were and are extremely complex and difficult, keeping in mind the lack of previous studies undertaken on these issues. The task force recognizes that a number of initiatives preceded its work in this field; namely, a 1982 study entitled *No Place to Go*, which was undertaken by Metropolitan Toronto, and a Metropolitan Toronto study entitled *A Study of Homelessness in Metropolitan Toronto: Characteristics, Trends and Solutions*.

Other studies, entitled *Major Action Task Force on Discharged Patients*, 1984, and *Off the Streets—A Case for Long-Term Housing*, 1985, report that traditionally, up to the early 1970s, private rooming and boarding houses and flop-houses provided various housing forms. However, the study indicates that the expense to conform to new housing bylaws, together with

the thrust towards gentrification, resulted in the disappearance of 7,000 room-and-bed units between 1971 and 1985.

In addition to these studies, the task force undertook to look into and examine initiatives outside Ontario. Specially commissioned papers have been received from Los Angeles, San Francisco, Portland, Seattle, Washington, Vancouver, Winnipeg and Montreal. These papers outline in detail initiatives and studies that have occurred in the various jurisdictions and the success that has been experienced.

A review of legislative measures has also been undertaken, ranging from measures in New York City where a moratorium on conversion, alteration and demolition of single-room-occupancy multiple dwellings occurred, to Seattle where the housing authority has spent \$48 million to purchase and rehabilitate 1,200 units under its housing preservation ordinance. These cases are cited in the state-of-knowledge report submitted by the task force in May 1986.

The report assesses the available literature on roomers, boarders and lodgers and the homeless both in Canada and the United States. The paper also examines current attempts being undertaken to solve these problems and look at available financial, social and physical solutions.

The task force also reviewed information on programs that might be applicable to roomers, boarders and lodgers but from which they are currently excluded for various reasons. For the first time in Ontario, the task force has summarized into a directory sources of information on roomers, boarders, lodgers and the homeless.

The directory is intended to assist three different groups of individuals interested and involved in this form of accommodation across Ontario. The first group is made up of the roomers and boarders themselves. Information contained in the directory is presented in a way that seeks to address their needs, and most important, how to find housing, food and advice on problems.

The second emphasis reflects the different groups trying to improve the situation in which roomers, boarders and lodgers find themselves. There is a network of people across the province who have views and information to share. They are listed in the directory by city and by area of interest.

The third group consists of the government agencies that want to contact individuals who can make use of their programs. As I mentioned earlier, this is the first time information has been put together exclusively for the benefit of

roomers, boarders and lodgers, and I hope this material will be revised and updated annually and kept as a source reference.

One of the most difficult tasks undertaken by the task force has been a background paper entitled Protecting Occupants and Owners of Rooming, Boarding and Lodging Accommodation. Occupants of this form of accommodation require effective protection against arbitrary eviction, seizure of possessions, rental gouging and other undesirable practices. In addition, owners and operators of this form of accommodation also require better recourse when things go wrong.

In an effort to ensure that there was an open consultative process in defining the problem and recommending workable and equitable recommendations, the task force held public hearings across the province last July and August. It went to Kingston, Hamilton, London, Windsor, Ottawa, Toronto, Kitchener-Waterloo, Guelph, Sudbury and Sault Ste. Marie. A total of 514 individuals attended the hearings, and the task force received 107 briefs and presentations. Each city has its specific problems and circumstances, even Sudbury.

The comments the task force heard suggested that there is a need to look at the issue of protection being afforded those living in rooming, boarding and lodging accommodations, the provision of a broad range of support services to these individuals and heightened public awareness and education.

Those are my comments with regard to vote 1901.

Mr. Gordon: That may be one of the most extensive briefs with regard to a vote I have heard since I came to this Legislature. Do I take it the minister plans to make an extended statement on each vote?

Hon. Mr. Curling: As the member knows, we regard all votes as important. For the understanding of the members, I will try my best to capitalize on what is needed so we can have a better debate on this. To say the vote is extensive—I will give a commentary on all the votes.

1700

Mr. Gordon: Estimates give an opportunity to the opposition parties to question the minister about the various ramifications of his ministry, to zero in on those items in the budget that give us pause and to look to the minister for the answers. That is what I expect this dialogue to be. The estimates book itself, which is given out at the beginning of estimates, does not contain—how

many pages do we have here? We have something like 35 pages of a speech being given on vote 1901.

I am going to give the minister an opportunity to tell us something about his ministry. We are looking not only for good programs but also for value for the money that is put out for those programs. We on this side of the House want to know how well this ministry and this minister are interacting with the problems faced by the people of Ontario.

Taking that into consideration, I have a number of questions for the minister. In regard to the ministry administration program, in 1985-86 the ministry spent \$9,233,600, as pointed out in the estimates book, which the minister has before him. I am glad to see he is looking at it. In 1986-87, the ministry spent \$12,430,300. That is a change of \$3,196,700. It is obvious that for ministry administration alone, in one year the amount has gone up considerably. Could the minister explain why we have this great increase in administration cost in this coming year over last year?

Hon. Mr. Curling: The member asks quite an extensive question. If he will give me a moment, I will tell him the various expenses from 1985-86 to 1986-87.

I presume the member was listening to the commentary earlier when we talked about setting up the separate ministries. Certain areas were separated from the ministry and certain programs were put in place that needed additional funding, such as the communication strategy, the rent review system, setting up the registry and, as I gather from the staff, communication, part two.

Even though many of the programs we had in the past were in place, they were not known of. Our communication strategy to get to all the various areas and media and bring about an awareness of some of our programs increased our advertising costs. The staffing we put in place also increased our costs. Our costs increased from \$9 million to \$12 million, a difference of \$3 million.

Mr. Gordon: Is the minister saying his costs are going up by \$3 million because of advertising and the addition of staff? That sounds like an awful lot of staff. Could the minister give us some idea of how many additional bodies he is bringing on board to sop up this \$3 million he is talking about? Perhaps he can refer as well to what advertising programs the ministry is going to be involved in and how much those advertising programs are going to cost. I am sure that the minister has sat down with his people in the

ministry and that they have gone over those advertising programs with him. Given that he is a hands-on kind of minister, I am sure he can answer the question without any difficulty.

Hon. Mr. Curling: I draw to the attention of the critic that on vote 1901, item 6, systems development services for 1985 is shown at \$3 million and in 1986 there is an increase of \$3 million for systems development services. That alone shows a great increase. The member wants to know where the items are that increased it by \$3 million. That in itself, systems development services, increased by that amount.

Mr. Gordon: Then am I to believe that the reason for the \$3-million increase in administration costs, where \$1 out of every \$100 in the budget is going into administration, is the computer? Is that what the minister is saying to me?

I can see there is a problem here. Why do we not move on a little? We will move on to the next point.

I notice that the main office expenditures are up 13 per cent over 1985-86. I wonder whether I can have some explanation why the main office expenditures in this coming budget are up 13 per cent over 1985-86.

Hon. Mr. Curling: If the member wants me to give him a full explanation of that, of the additional staff, costs and all that, I can get back to him and tell him how many staff we increased by. Going back to the first question about systems development services, I can give him a detailed explanation later on.

Mr. Gordon: I wonder whether I might go on to the next point. The minister knows I have been rather critical of him in the House with regard to a lot of the publicity that goes on and that surrounds his ministry. Earlier in the estimates, I made the point that I thought there was more publicity coming out of this ministry than there were apartment units being built in the province today. We have more than 200,000 people looking for affordable housing and another 40,000 families looking for social housing in this province. It really bothers me when I see that in 1986-87 we are looking at a 30 per cent increase in information services. A 30 per cent increase in information services is almost unheard of in any government, and yet we are not just hearing about it in the government; we are hearing about it in this ministry. Surely the minister can give us an explanation for a 30 per cent increase.

Hon. Mr. Curling: I will have to get back to the member on the detail of what caused the

increase in information services. I have tried to explain to him, but I do not think he accepts, that there are many promotion and information devices to be developed in informing the people of the programs we have. The member says he has been critical of me in that way. That is his job but he has to admit that more people know about the programs of the Ministry of Housing than knew previously.

A good example is that when we advertised social housing, nonprofit housing, we had 28,000 applications. Therefore, there is a cost for the very effective way in which we promote our programs. If the member wants me to come back to him with details and tell him specifically where the growth was, I can do that.

1710

Mr. Gordon: While the minister is at it, perhaps his staff people, who are sitting there passing him papers and pointing out to him some of the facts, can help him on this vote. Let us take supply and office services. They are up by 15 per cent. What are we doing? Are we buying more pencils? What is going on?

I come from an area where we are looking at 12 per cent unemployment, where people are having a hard time paying their taxes. They are already groaning under the weight of the budget the Treasurer brought in, his first budget, whereby the government ended up with a surplus of about \$2.5 billion. Is he trying to spend the Treasurer's surplus? Is that what is going on?

I see systems development services are up by nearly 70 per cent. Is he going to go back and tell me that is that \$3 million? Here is another one, legal services. I know in the law profession in Ontario at present there are a lot of new graduates coming out and some of them are having trouble finding jobs, but I find his ministry's legal services are up by nearly 40 per cent. Would he like to comment on the legal services part of his ministry?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I know it is the prerogative of a critic to try each line and say, "Explain that." Again, the critic from the NDP stated too with regard to the programs we have that, for instance, people did not know about the rent review program. He said we spent a lot of time looking at Bill 51 and that he had hoped we would have spent more time on the other issues of housing.

Within the rent review alone, Bill 51, the cost was there in the sense of the brochures we sent out to tenants advising them of their rights and what is available to them. We know we are communicating not only with people of English

or French backgrounds, but we are also communicating with a wide variety of people of different languages. Those messages were not getting there. I have instructed the staff to make sure those messages and the available services are being explained properly in the languages of the people they affect.

We have a multicultural society, and if we want to serve those communities, then we must speak in their languages so they can understand. It is costly to advertise. We advertised about the guidelines to tell people the process to go through. We had many brochures and pamphlets sent out. As a matter of fact, I am quite sure there is one in his office in Sudbury right now. We give you any amount of information you need in the flyers explaining the process. Those are the costs for these and for advertising the Renterprise program and the other nonprofit programs. The new rent review legislation brought about an increase in staff. We moved from covering not only the pre-1976 rental units but all. That takes staff.

If he is saying to us that cost of \$3 million is a matter of waste or is not warranted, I say we got much more—and we are not spending it all yet—for the \$12 million in a ratio than for the \$9 million. We have reached a far wider community. We have made the Ministry of Housing a place that people see serving them. Line by line, as one goes along about our legal costs, we had some legal responsibilities. We had an extensive building code review, the building industrial strategy, and in many areas we have gone beyond what is expected of us to reach people by communicating with them. It used staff. It has used an increase in computer services and legal services.

Mr. Reville: Excuse me, Mr. Chairman. I wonder whether the member for Sudbury will permit a supplementary.

Mr. Gordon: Yes, certainly.

Mr. Reville: I have listened to the minister's answer and I am becoming concerned that the amounts of money that he has indicated were for advertising various programs may appear in other votes. For instance, under vote 1905 there seems to be money allocated to talk to people about Bill 51. It does not seem appropriate to describe that money under vote 1901 if it is under vote 1905. In addition, for all we know, information about some of the supply programs may be included under other votes.

I am not satisfied with the minister's answers. Will he undertake to be more specific about answers to the questions from the member for

Sudbury? Clearly, there appears to be money in the budget under other votes to cover information about specific programs.

Hon. Mr. Curling: The member is perfectly right. In reply to the question that was asked, I said that if we look at Bill 51, the rent review bill, we can say those expenses are spread out accordingly in different areas. There are added legal services which may come with drafting the legislation, which will fall under this area. The member puts it as if Bill 51 is out there and all the costs are associated with that, but we would not use any part of the administrative services of the ministry. We must use this area and we have expanded this area to accommodate the expanded programs we have done.

To be more specific about the bill, the member for Sudbury asked why the cost is like that. He targeted one or two areas, and I said that built into that are some of the extra costs that were used for Bill 51, Bill 11 and other areas. As far as I am concerned, there is no vote called Bill 51 or Bill 11, but other costs are involved right across the votes.

The Deputy Chairman: Are you satisfied?

Mr. Reville: Yes, thank you.

Mr. Gordon: The member for Riverdale is always satisfied, so why not just ask me about it.

Further to what we were talking about, as Housing critic, let me be fair to the minister and let me be fair also to the deputy minister and to the ministry staff. I think I am speaking for the majority of the citizens of Ontario when I tell the minister that most people are probably looking for an increase in pay in the range of two or three per cent, or, if they are very lucky, four per cent. When we come to his budget and we find it has shot up to such an extent and that ministry expenditures are up by 30 per cent overall, we have to question that. We have to ask on behalf of those citizens of Ontario exactly what is going on. Those are the answers we are looking for.

Given that we are into this discussion on administration and we see here that 80 per cent of the main office expenditures are taken up with staff—and naturally staffing is always very important—and given the kinds of moneys the minister seems to want to spend as the Minister of Housing, despite the fact that people are getting so little back in their pay packets right now, will the minister table for us in the House on Thursday, which is when we come back to these estimates again, the salaries paid out to the people in the administration part of his office, the salaries of the ministerial staff? Will he elaborate

on the qualifications of that staff at the same time?

Furthermore, can the minister tell us what the costs will be for the accelerated career development initiatives of the ministry?

1720

Hon. Mr. Curling: Perhaps I should explain a little. The number of people in this career development options program was 21, and 20 people have so far been trained and been able to leave the system and find careers outside. One person has yet to be trained and to find an appropriate place to go. It is zero-based; there is no cost to us. As a matter of fact, the training was done within. Therefore, to ask what the cost is, I would have to go to the other side and ask what are the cost savings? To give the member the figure of how much was saved in that process, it was \$474,000.

Mr. Gordon: With regard to vote 1901, which we are on right now, can the minister tell us the occupational target areas for the affirmative action program in his ministry?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I remarked that the affirmative action program was targeted to women. If I can recall, we were talking about francophones, visible minorities and the handicapped as groups we were going to be targeting in future.

Mr. Gordon: Moving on to item 2, information services, I would like to talk a little about contracting out. I understand the ministry is into contracting out. Can the minister tell us what costs are involved in contracting out and exactly what he does contract out?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I want to decipher what the contracts are. I do not want to associate the Ontario Housing Corp. contracts within this one. I gather that the specific ones we are talking about, the communication contracts handled under this vote, are communication contracts of that nature. Communication contracts, writing pamphlets, etc., were the areas offered out. If the member wants a list of those, he can have one, but it is within those areas that we contract under communications, under vote 1901.

Mr. Gordon: Given the minister's reply, can we then have an itemized list for Thursday of the various firms involved, which they are, how much he is paying these firms and what kind of contracts are involved with these campaigns—for example, his advertising campaigns, which no doubt have been seen by many of us to have been quite expensive, almost exorbitantly so.

In talking about communications services, I am a little concerned about the targeting of the services to the francophone population, for example. Can the minister tell us something about the targeting of communications services to the francophone population in Ontario at present, which falls under this vote?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I presume the member is asking, for instance, where we send these French advertisements and to what areas we send them. As he knows, there are areas designated as French areas, and we target the French newspapers—we advertise in the French newspapers—in areas that are targeted as French areas. There are areas from which we would get requests—in other words, in other multicultural areas.

Did the member ask only about the French?

Mr. Gordon: I was asking about francophones.

Hon. Mr. Curling: Just in areas that are designated. If there are requests, we will send them out too.

Mr. Gordon: I have asked quite a few questions. Perhaps the member for Riverdale has a few he would like to ask, and then I would like to come back to this subject again.

Mr. Reville: To go back over some of the territory that has already been covered by the member for Sudbury, can the minister tell us how many employees the ministry administration program tends to have and how many it had last year so that we can understand the difference in the growth?

Mr. Chairman: Only one person can be on his feet at a time. If you want the minister to answer—

Mr. Reville: I will sit down.

Hon. Mr. Curling: Sorry. I thought he had completed his question.

Mr. Reville: No. I had fallen into a dream, but I will sit down and let the minister answer the question.

Hon. Mr. Curling: That is okay. It is understandable that the member dreams at times.

It is quite a difficult question that the member asks. Last year, as he knows, we were under one portfolio, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. I gather there are some answers here. Let me see if I can find an answer, because the member wants me to be specific about the number who are employed by the Ministry of Housing, and that will be kind of difficult. I will

have to get back to him to tell him the specific number.

Mr. Reville: To clarify, it is under “ministry administration program” on page 20 of the briefing book.

Hon. Mr. Curling: Did the member ask how many, and he saw 339 on page 20? Is that what he is saying?

If the member is directing me to page 20, where it states there are 333 classified positions and 43 unclassified staff, for a total of 37, is he asking how many staff are in the ministry while it is there?

Mr. Reville: I was trying to help the minister understand how his briefing book works. The answer is on page 20. That is the answer the member for Sudbury was looking for earlier.

Can the minister tell us, in the same manner, why it is that audit services will be less expensive in this fiscal year than in the previous fiscal year?

1730

Hon. Mr. Curling: I must thank the member for telling me how my briefing book works. It is almost a waste of time if he asks a question to which he knows the answer. On the other hand, he asks why there is a reduction in audit fees. I gather that when there was a turnover in staff, the people who left had a higher salary and new people were taken on at a reduced salary, hence the reduction in amount.

Mr. Reville: Is the minister suggesting that \$974,000 is somehow less than \$964,000? If he finds that confusing, how about if I read to him from the right page? Rather, is it the problem that he is getting more recoveries? Is that not where the saving is; more recoveries, which I assume are payments made by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp.? Is that correct?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I gather the member is talking about the \$159,200 as a recovery cost and he is asking how we got that. When we do any work for the Ontario Housing Corp., we charge it, it gets the federal subsidy for it and in turn pays us back, so there is more or less of a saving. Instead of contracting the work out, which is done in here, we get that saving from the amount of money paid back to us. The \$159,200 is a reflection of that saving.

Mr. Gordon: Maybe we can move on to another area of this vote. Under the Ontario building program, I notice the budget was \$2,209,000 in 1985-86 and in 1986-87 it has gone up to \$6,644,600. This budget has increased threefold. Could the minister explain

these dramatic increases in the Ontario building program budget?

Hon. Mr. Curling: The Ontario building program; is that vote 1902? I thought we were going to take each vote as it goes along and then we could deal with that.

Mr. Chairman: I checked with the Clerk, and it was my understanding that the Deputy Chairman asked if we would stay on vote 1901 right through and carry all votes and items at the end. It was my understanding that was agreed to by the committee.

Hon. Mr. Curling: I am not insisting; I am just asking whether we are on vote 1902 now.

Mr. Chairman: It means that because the committee has so instructed, we are going to be going all over the various five votes throughout.

Mr. Reville: I suspect the Minister of Housing was going to do a leadoff to vote 1902. I wonder whether the member for Sudbury would hold his questions until we finish vote 1901, because we are going to interrupt the minister's rhythm and that is not a good idea.

Mr. Chairman: I am in your hands. That is why the Deputy Chairman asked earlier whether it was going to be totally wide-ranging or whether we were going to discuss and carry each vote and item as we go.

Mr. Gordon: If the minister would like the time to get the answer to that question, it is fine with me.

I guess, though, what we are pointing out in these estimates is the fact that it seems this ministry is out of hand when it comes to the increases in expenditures. We have to know why, because we have the people of Ontario looking at it. As I indicated earlier, their pay packets are increasing somewhere in the neighbourhood of two, three or four per cent, if they are lucky. Some are getting no increases. We have to know why this ministry and this minister have launched such a wide-ranging, all-encompassing spending program. We should also have in this House a clear explanation of why this is being done, what the programs are and what people will be affected by these programs.

As I indicated, this is the first time in all the years I have been in this House that I have seen a minister come in and not only make a statement at the beginning of estimates but also have a comprehensive paper for each vote. It does not give the opposition the opportunity to ask specific questions about that ministry, which I believe we have a right to ask.

Hon. Mr. Curling: I want the honourable members to know that I am not resisting the questions in any way. I would like the debate to be productive.

I will admit I am not an expert in presenting estimates. I think the members are all experts in asking questions. It is simply to proceed in an orderly fashion, in order to give members the best answer we can. If I do not have it, I have no qualms in saying I will get back to members with it. It is in no way restricting members. We are keeping it orderly so that my thoughts can be kept orderly too. I am not as bright and intelligent as the honourable member who can jump from vote to vote. That is why I have staff to help give me some of the answers.

I want to come back to the member by responding that we are spending government money and we will be spending it in a very effective and efficient manner.

Mr. Chairman: May I make it clear that the committee did decide for itself that it would be wide-ranging. Technically, we will be staying on vote 1901 until the end of the estimates, 12.5 hours, and we will then be carrying all votes and items.

If the committee had wanted to go vote by vote and item by item, it would have so instructed. Even though it is not as orderly, it is what the committee has stated it wished. Therefore, we will range widely throughout.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: What has become clear in the questioning from my counterpart in the Progressive Conservative caucus and from me is that the minister has absolutely no idea why the ministry administration program will cost approximately \$3 million more in 1986-87 than it did in 1985-86.

I have no objection to the minister reading a prepared statement before each vote, but I certainly object strongly to the minister having no answers to why \$3 million is being added to one section of his ministry.

1740

However, I want to go now to some information that was contained in the very long statement the minister read prior to discussing vote 1901. I have done some calculations. His opening statement was 24 pages long. Vote 1901 is 35 pages long. If that ratio keeps up, by the time we get to vote 1905 his opening statement will be 167 pages long, which is something to contemplate, Mr. Chairman. God willing, you will not have to sit through all of that, but somebody will.

I would like to refer the minister back to his statement on vote 1901 and deal with one of the

policy matters that is being addressed in it. Beginning at page 23, the minister actually spends the next 12 pages talking about the very serious problem affecting those people who can least afford housing, who normally would be found in boarding and lodging houses or rooming houses, and he describes the action of the Bairstow task force. Although none of this is news to us—we have all heard it before—some questions arise out of that material.

The minister points out that provision for hostel-type accommodation under the convert-to-rent program should be of some assistance in replacing housing stock lost. First, can the minister expand on what he means by hostel-type accommodation under the convert-to-rent program?

Hon. Mr. Curling: In the past, the convert-to-rent program did not include hostel-type accommodation. What we have done in the last program is to expand it to include hostel-type accommodation. This will of course be of some assistance to those people who seek that type of accommodation.

Mr. Reville: What does the minister mean when he says “hostel-type accommodation”?

Hon. Mr. Curling: Within that jurisdiction we have roomers, boarders and lodgers in accommodations that are not similar to the usual arrangement, where people share facilities. We have included in the convert-to-rent program accommodations where people can have shared facilities; in other words, accommodating the hostel-type tenant. That is where the hostel-type situation would come in, regarding hostel-types as those where people would be sharing facilities.

Mr. Reville: I do not understand the minister's explanation at all. I am trying to discover some kind of understandable definition of the kind of accommodation that is referred to as “hostel type.” Does he mean a mattress on the floor, as is customary in hostels? If he cannot describe it now, can the minister undertake to return with a description of hostel-type accommodation and the numbers of units of that kind of accommodation that are expected to be provided under convert-to-rent?

Hon. Mr. Curling: Maybe I did not do such a good job, but those are the nonself-contained units versus the self-contained units; in other words, where people are sharing bathrooms and kitchen facilities. That is what we define as hostel-type; those who share those types of facilities.

Mr. Reville: Would that include accommodation similar to that provided at the corner of Jarvis and Shuter in what is called the Third House? Is that what the minister means by hostel-type accommodation?

Hon. Mr. Curling: The member has specifically named a place. I would have to see about the one on Jarvis. I would have to see the place itself to see whether it is a hostel-type. Does it have shared bathrooms? If there are shared facilities and it is a convert-to-rent—I do not know; I will have to get back to the member on that specific case.

Mr. Reville: It is amazing that the minister is not totally familiar with the Third House at the corner of Jarvis and Shuter. It is 11 storeys high. It is the first example of its type. The minister should pay attention; he is going to learn here. It is like a high-rise rooming house, in which people have a bedroom but they share a sitting room, kitchen and bathroom. This is of help to the minister to be able to determine whether this is what we are talking about here.

Another good example would be a university dormitory, where a person has a room and shares a bathroom and may have a kitchenette. Is that hostel-type accommodation?

Hon. Mr. Curling: It is rather tempting. The member says that if I pay attention, I can learn from him. If he were in my position and paying attention to the Treasurer—I can learn a lot more from him than I do from the member. However, I have learned a lot from the member over the months.

I have explained what hostel-type accommodation is. The member is surprised I do not know about the accommodation at Jarvis. I am the Minister of Housing for Ontario, and many times when I concentrate outside of Toronto it is because I am paying more attention to a wider field of housing.

I have explained that accommodation with shared facilities such as bathrooms and kitchens is of the hostel-type. I presume it is quite possible the specific case the member has raised would fall under that definition.

Recently, I opened one of the Ryerson Polytechnical Institute student housing situations. Those also have shared facilities in some respects.

Mr. Reville: Can the minister tell us how many units of hostel-type accommodation he is expecting to provide in this round of allocations?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I cannot say offhand how many we are expecting now. I could get back to

him on how much we anticipate. I presume the member is speaking solely about the convert-to-rent program.

Mr. Reville: Yes.

Hon. Mr. Curling: I will have to get back to the member and tell him what I anticipate in hostel-type accommodation from that program.

Mr. Reville: The description of the work of the task force goes on for some length, about 12 pages, but it does not indicate the conclusions to which the task force came. It is my understanding that this task force was originally intended to report by the end of October. Can the minister indicate when we will see the report of the task force on roomers and lodgers?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I have received the report from Mr. Bairstow and handed it to the advisory committee at a discussion today. It will be looking at his report. I would say that within a very short time, a week or 10 days, the member will have the report.

1750

Mr. Reville: Can the minister give us a hint about whether roomers will finally be protected under the Landlord and Tenant Act?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I can give the member a hint and say that the kind of approach we use will be consistent. We have received this report from Mr. Bairstow. I have now given it to the advisory committee, and it will make its recommendation to me. At that time members will know specifically the direction I will go. I would also like to have the member's comment on that report as soon as it is in his hands.

Mr. Reville: Is the minister telling the House that the report of the Task Force on Roomers, Boarders and Lodgers is going to the same advisory committee that invented Bill 51? I ask him to tell me it is not so.

Hon. Mr. Curling: It is not so.

Mr. Reville: No?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I want to explain that. It is not the same group. A group of people will be looking at it. It is not going to the Rent Review Advisory Committee, so I am saying it is not so. It is not going to the same group of people who looked at Bill 51. I was just indicating that I am seriously looking forward to the member's comments because of the expertise and knowledge he has in that area.

Mr. Reville: Can I get the minister to turn to page 33 and provide me with some explanation of

the last sentence, which says, "In addition, owners and operators of this form of accommodation also require better recourse when 'things go wrong.'" I am somewhat at a loss to know what that might mean.

Hon. Mr. Curling: As the member knows, many of the operators have expressed their frustration because of some of the client groups or the tenants in their accommodation. For instance, let us say I am an ex-psychiatric patient who has been housed within that accommodation. For some reason or other, things go wrong. I may need more treatment and not know where to turn or the resources and avenues that there are.

We are saying that owners and operators should be aware of where to turn to. There is no use calling the police if there is disruptive behaviour among their tenants. We help them with the avenue they can take to direct the disorder when things go wrong. We have to look at those disorders. Many times, the wrong people are called and the wrong action is taken, and it is much more disruptive to all the tenants.

Mr. Reville: Is the minister talking about some kind of education program for owners and operators on how to solve particular problems?

Hon. Mr. Curling: What I am talking about is partly that. That may not be sufficient. If the system is not sufficient to take up that specific situation, we must look to putting things in place so that redress is available. Education will only tell what is available; if it tells me something is not available, we would like to make a correction to address that inadequacy.

Mr. Chairman, because of the time, it might be better to address the next vote, vote 1902, in the next session.

On motion by Hon. Mr. Curling, the committee of supply reported progress.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Tomorrow we will proceed with second reading of the adoption bill, the number of which eludes me at the moment. I understand that there may be some amendments and that we will go into committee as well. In the unlikely event that debate is completed, we will return to these estimates tomorrow afternoon, if that is convenient for all concerned.

The House adjourned at 5:56 p.m.

APPENDIX

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS*

(125 members)

Second Session, 33rd Parliament

Lieutenant Governor: Hon. L. M. Alexander, PC, QC

Speaker: Hon. H. A. Edighoffer

Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers

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- Allen, R. (Hamilton West NDP)
 Andrewes, P. W. (Lincoln PC)
 Ashe, G. L. (Durham West PC)
 Baetz, R. C. (Ottawa West PC)
 Barlow, W. W. (Cambridge PC)
 Bennett, C. F. (Ottawa South PC)
 Bernier, L. (Kenora PC)
 Bossy, M. L. (Chatham-Kent L)
Bradley, Hon. J. J., Minister of the Environment (St. Catharines L)
 Brandt, A. S. (Sarnia PC)
 Breagh, M. J. (Oshawa NDP)
 Bryden, M. H. (Beaches-Woodbine NDP)
 Callahan, R. V. (Brampton L)
 Caplan, Hon. E. (Oriole L)
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*The lists in this appendix, brought up to date as necessary, are published in Hansard in the first and last issues of each session and on the first sitting day of each month.

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Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 33rd Parliament
Tuesday, January 13, 1987

Speaker: Honourable H. A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday, January 13, 1987

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers.

VISITOR

Mr. Speaker: I ask all members of the Legislative Assembly to join with me in recognizing and welcoming in the Speaker's gallery the Minister of Public Works and Services of Newfoundland, the Honourable D. Haig Young. Welcome, Mr. Young.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

PEEL AFTERCARE RESOURCES

Mr. Andrewes: On December 18, the Canadian Mental Health Association, Peel branch, wrote to its clients to say the following: "We regret to advise you that effective January 1, 1987, the Peel Activities and Rehabilitation program (PAR), North and South, will be unable to accept any further referrals from your agency."

Peel Aftercare Resources serves to integrate the psychiatrically disabled into the community of Brampton and Mississauga and to reduce the incidence of readmission to hospitals. Peel Aftercare Resources is funded by the Ministry of Health, and its co-ordinators were encouraged some time ago to expand and enrich its community-based efforts. The expanded program was endorsed by the Peel District Health Council as its first priority for funding. This view was conveyed to the Ministry of Health. Those managing the program moved forward to deal with the pressing needs in the community.

The Ministry of Health, through staff, encouraged Peel Aftercare Resources to initiate an expanded program but failed to address the funding requirements. In avoiding its responsibilities in the case, the ministry puts in jeopardy an innovative and dedicated program. The denial of funds could mean even greater costs to the taxpayer as the readmission to hospital of many patients cannot now be avoided.

PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL

Mr. Reville: The Ministry of Health continues to incarcerate people in an unfit facility at Oak

Ridge, the only maximum security facility for mentally disordered men in Ontario.

Oak Ridge is supposed to be a psychiatric hospital. Instead, it is an antiquated prison. Behind a 17-foot-high chain-link fence is a dimly lit, poorly ventilated building containing cells with concrete-slab beds. Toilets are in full view of staff and visitors. It is said that a glass of water would freeze on the window sill in the winter.

Oak Ridge is clearly a nontherapeutic environment. Recreational facilities are almost nonexistent. Occupational and educational settings are extremely poor. There is no private space for psychiatrists or others to interview patients. No one should be forced to live in such unhealthy and undignified conditions.

Oak Ridge has to be seen to be believed. Legislators and the public will have an opportunity to see Ontario's national disgrace on the CBC program *Man Alive* on Wednesday, January 14, at 9:30 p.m.

The minister has already said he does not find Oak Ridge to be appropriate in today's context. Absolutely. Where is the plan? Not even Rumpelstiltskin could spin a psychiatric hospital out of a medieval dungeon.

CONTROL OF SMOKING

Mr. Sterling: On Thursday, January 15, Canada will be marking the beginning of National Nonsmoking Week. In 1975, the World Health Organization said: "Smoking-related diseases are such important causes of disability and premature death in developed countries that the control of cigarette smoking could do more to improve health and prolong life in these countries than any single action in the whole field of preventive medicine."

Bill 71, the Non-Smokers' Protection Act, does control cigarette smoking in public places and in the work place. As members know, I introduced this piece of legislation on December 5, 1985. Bill 71 received second reading in January 1986. A committee of the Legislature heard from members of the public in September 1986, and there were amendments made to the bill in December 1986.

Yesterday, Bill 71 was reported to the House and stands in Orders and Notices for third

reading. The Non-Smokers' Protection Act has gone through the full legislative process, save one step. Will this government do something meaningful during National Nonsmoking Week and call Bill 71 for third and final reading?

LABOUR DISPUTES

Mr. Breagh: I want to draw to the government's attention today two vexing labour disputes in my riding. The first began in the early part of December, when the employees of the Association for the Developmentally Handicapped of Durham went on strike seeking their first contract. Since then there have been basically no negotiations, and it has been a very sad Christmas indeed for those employees seeking a first contract. The second one began just before Christmas, when the employees of Atlantic Sugar found themselves locked out in a labour dispute. In both instances, there have been no real negotiations, since the strike began at ADHOD and since the lockout began at Atlantic Sugar.

This government has an obligation to try to put forward labour legislation which allows people to bargain freely but which does not allow one side to terminate the bargaining process. In both cases I have mentioned that has been precisely what has happened. It has been a sad Christmas for both groups of workers. In the case of the ADHOD people, others are caught in the middle of this dispute as well.

The Ministry of Community and Social Services says it has no direct responsibility in this matter at all, but I think one has to grant that there are others working for similar agencies within the same region, and these employees are simply seeking parity. I ask this government to take a look at its labour legislation and see what it can do, what initiatives it can take, to resolve both these labour disputes.

HAZARDOUS SPILL

Mr. Mitchell: I had hoped the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) would be in the House today. I rise to follow up on a question raised in this Legislature yesterday with regard to the oil spill that occurred on National Research Council property in the Ottawa-Carleton area.

Although this spill occurred on November 7, it did not come to the attention of the public until the January 11 edition of the Sunday Herald. What bothers me about this whole situation is that in speaking to the media, an employee of the provincial Ministry of the Environment said, and I understand I am quoting correctly, that this was

not a provincial problem because it fell on federal land. I would like to know when it does become a provincial matter. Does it only become a provincial matter when it begins dripping into Sawmill Creek and into the Rideau system?

I would like the government to ensure that the Minister of the Environment does a full investigation of what happened there and informs the House of the results of that investigation. It is reported that they managed to catch all but 500 gallons. According to the federal Minister of the Environment it is a miracle if they did. This House needs to be informed.

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PAPER MILL

Mr. Morin-Strom: Although Sault Ste. Marie and area continues to face economic crises of immense proportions as a result of Algoma Steel's down-sizing of operations, our community received some very good news last week. That was the announcement by St. Marys Paper, the Sault's second-largest employer, that it has approved a major capital project to install a new paper machine which will double the capacity of the paper mill in the Sault.

The total cost of this project, an extremely large one for a corporation the size of St. Marys Paper, is estimated at \$141 million, including the cost of refinancing existing debt. This project will create hundreds of jobs in our local community. It is projected to start this April, with the completion date slated for November 1988.

The mill's productivity will improve dramatically as the output of the mill will be doubled from its current level. The jobs of the 400 current workers, along with those of an estimated 20 workers who will enter the permanent work force at that operation, will be guaranteed in the long term as a result of our having a technologically advanced facility.

I trust the Ministry of Natural Resources and the other ministries that deal with St. Marys Paper will do everything they can to expedite this important project and to ensure it gets off the ground as quickly as possible. It will be creating many of the jobs we so desperately need.

PEEL AFTERCARE RESOURCES

Mr. Offer: I listened with great interest to the member for Lincoln (Mr. Andrewes) expressing the need for extra funding to Peel Aftercare Resources. I too am aware of the necessity for increased funding for the wonderful service that agency provides.

I was very happy to make the announcement last week that the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston) had also acknowledged this need and had increased funding to that service by \$84,000, which is an increase of more than 50 per cent over the funding provided by previous administrations.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

SAFETY IN SPORTS

Hon. Mr. Eakins: Everyone, every child or adult, who is involved in a sports or fitness activity in Ontario must be able to take part knowing that every effort has been made to ensure his safety.

It is my view and the view of this government that violence in sports and preventable injury in sports and fitness cannot be tolerated. Improving safety in sports and fitness is one of the government's ongoing objectives. To meet that objective, my ministry has developed a series of important initiatives for which we will allocate more than \$1.4 million over the next 15 months.

To create the regulatory environment necessary to support our safety strategy, I will be introducing amendments to the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation Act. These amendments will consolidate legislative authority dealing with safety in amateur sports and fitness within my portfolio. Under these amendments, the Minister of Tourism and Recreation will be accorded sufficient direct powers to act in the public interest on matters of safety in sports and fitness. It will enable me to intervene if necessary to prohibit the use of an unsafe sports or fitness facility or to order an amateur sports or fitness association to cease unsafe activities.

Further, a number of safety priorities have been identified by the Ontario Sport Medicine and Safety Advisory Board in conjunction with my ministry. As you know, the sports medicine and safety advisory board was established by order in council in April 1985 to investigate the escalating incidence of injuries resulting from the participation boom in amateur sports and fitness programs. The board's input to our strategy is invaluable.

My ministry has created a number of specific safety initiatives. The first of these initiatives is to work towards the creation of a single governing body for amateur hockey. Such a body could provide uniformity in policy, coaching and instructional programs, the lack of which has impeded progress in injury and risk reduction.

There are now three bodies running organized hockey in Ontario. In addition to those, there are

the unaffiliated hockey leagues. They represent about half of all amateur hockey in the province. My ministry will work with the Hockey Development Centre for Ontario to pursue our objective of a single hockey governing body. I firmly believe this is essential to improve safety in the sport.

Also, I have instructed my ministry to make a concerted effort to encourage unaffiliated hockey leagues to follow Canadian Amateur Hockey Association rules. There is no doubt that when amateur hockey leagues in Ontario apply the rules universally, the sport will be safer.

As a first effort in making hockey facilities safer, grants from my ministry will be provided on a cost-shared basis to install hockey safety nets with breakaway capability.

Good officiating also has a key role in making amateur hockey a safe, by-the-rules sport and is essential in helping to curtail violence. It is my view and that of the Hockey Injuries and Safety Review Committee that amateur hockey will be safer when we have better recruiting, training and supervision of referees.

My ministry will work in conjunction with the Hockey Development Centre for Ontario and consult with representatives of other hockey groups to determine if the development of a hockey officials' association will contribute to a reduction of violence and injuries in amateur hockey.

My ministry is funding the hockey training program known as the trainer's certification program to enhance and update training and to make it available to more people. Team trainers and therapists will learn to work with players and coaches to prevent injuries and ensure proper care if any injury occurs.

In addition, a standard education and training program will be developed for all sport trainers, therapists and coaches. As well, specific grants will be made available on a cost-shared basis to assist provincial sport associations with clinics to train sport trainers and therapists.

Concern for safety also extends to the fitness industry. Unfortunately, safety measures have not kept pace with the boom in the fitness industry. My ministry will work with the industry to help establish safety standards. These will relate to operations, equipment and the training and job qualifications required by professional employees of fitness and health clubs. The responsible organizations will, I am sure, welcome the development of these regulations.

I might add that these efforts respond to the many recommendations made to me by several coroners' inquests on the inadequacy of safety programs for the fitness industry. In 1987-88 my ministry's safety program will be expanded to develop a database on injuries in sports and fitness.

As recommended by the sports medicine and safety advisory board, one of the first research priorities will be information-gathering on the frequency and cause of injuries. We will use not only the information-gathering facilities of the sports advisory board but also those of existing provincial systems and organizations such as the Ontario health insurance plan.

Learning all we can about the nature and cause of injuries is the single most important step towards reducing injuries. Research will be conducted so that safety issues can be identified and solutions found.

Although members have heard me focus on hockey and fitness, I am also concerned about other sports that have a history of preventable injuries. Initially, my ministry will identify other sports and work with them to develop specific safety programs that will make them safer for the public. Accordingly, grants for safety programs in designated sports, including hockey, will be made available.

We will do more. As safety standards are developed, grants from my ministry will be contingent on these standards being met. Let me assure the House that where there is no safety component, there will be no grant.

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Government and the corporate sector are actively involved in public awareness campaigns to motivate our citizens to lead more active lives. Now we will ask the private sector to help make that participation safer. We invite corporations to join us in developing a public awareness campaign aimed at creating a safer sports and fitness environment.

This is a long list of important safety initiatives. The need to create vital programs such as these for sports and fitness has been underscored repeatedly. The media, editorials, letters to the editor, letters addressed to me as minister and to some honourable members on both sides of the House have focused on sports safety. The member for Sudbury East (Mr. Martel) has done excellent work in drawing attention to the problem of violence in amateur hockey, and I salute him.

I would like particularly to praise the Ontario Sport Medicine and Safety Advisory Board for

its role in making sports safer. I assure members that when we receive its final report, further initiatives will be announced.

I said earlier that there has been a boom in physical activity in this province. My ministry is proud of that. As a result of our enhanced safety strategy, I can now also say that every child and adult can take part, knowing that our best efforts are being made to ensure their safety.

SUNDAY TRADING

Hon. Mr. Nixon: After discussions with the House leaders, I am able to announce that a select committee to consider the issue of Sunday closings will be established. The committee will be chaired by the member for Oakville (Mr. O'Connor), a well-known expert in this important and sensitive subject.

Following further consultation with the House leaders to finalize the membership and terms of reference, the motion striking the committee will be put before the House.

CONTROL OF SMOKING

Hon. Mr. Elston: Members will be aware that this Thursday, January 15, we will begin a National Nonsmoking Week throughout Canada. Wednesday, January 21, has been designated Weedless Wednesday, and all Canadians who continue to smoke will be challenged to give up their smoking habits on that day.

The theme of this nonsmoking campaign is that secondhand smoke hurts and its focus is on the control of smoke in the work place. I feel strongly that the Ontario Ministry of Health should take a leadership role on this issue and support the effort with concrete action.

The evidence is well documented that smoking represents a major health hazard to smokers and nonsmokers alike. It is also clear that as a society we are coming to understand the real health dangers associated with smoking.

Last spring my ministry's health promotion branch surveyed all Ministry of Health employees to find out their views and ideas about smoking in the work place. Nine out of 10 respondents wanted to see, at the very least, smoking in designated areas only.

Today I am announcing a new corporate objective of establishing all Ministry of Health facilities as smoke-free. To enable us to reach our objective successfully, an implementation group will be appointed within the ministry and we will proceed in stages.

On March 1, we will begin to phase in the program and smoking will be permitted in

designated areas only. At the end of a one-year period of operation, we will evaluate the policy to determine how we should then proceed.

I am asking the ministry's 12,000 employees to give their active support to this new policy and make it work effectively in the 70 ministry locations throughout Ontario.

I wish to note that the Ontario health insurance plan office at 2195 Yonge Street in Toronto has already undertaken a successful campaign to establish a smoke-free work place. Ian Searle and his staff are to be congratulated for their efforts. They have become an example for our other locations throughout the province.

I recognize that I am asking ministry employees to participate in a new program that for some may be difficult at first. We want to give those employees who continue to smoke every encouragement and support they need to abandon the habit.

Smokers will be encouraged to participate in smoking cessation programs sponsored by the ministry. Smokers will also have access to counselling services provided by the Ministry of Government Services employee health service branch. Regional personnel administrators will also be available to assist staff in obtaining information about the support services available.

The success of our transition to a smoke-free environment will depend on the active participation and co-operation of both management and staff, smokers and nonsmokers alike. I expect and look forward to the support of all ministry employees as we set out on this new venture. The success of our new program will depend upon a willingness to work together with sensitivity and mutual respect.

As we develop and document our experience with Project Smokefree in the ministry, it is our ultimate intention to make the program and the resource materials developed for it available to businesses and other organizations within both the private and the public sectors.

MOVABLE ASSETS

Hon. Mr. Keyes: The Ministry of the Solicitor General was included in two comments on government-wide matters in the Provincial Auditor's 1986 report. It was one of the ministries reviewed in regard to movable assets control. Also, it was one of the ministries about which it was noted that the difference between fair market rent and actual rent charged for government-provided employee accommodation was not being reported as a taxable benefit.

With regard to the taxable benefit issue, the matter is under study by Management Board of Cabinet, as indicated by the response on page 23 of the Provincial Auditor's report. We will be guided by its conclusions.

In regard to the control of movable assets, the auditor noted this ministry has begun a complete, computerized movable asset control system. I am pleased to report we have moved forward significantly in the implementation of this system.

Implementation began in July 1985 by conducting a physical inventory of the entire ministry. At present, this task is 80 per cent complete. We anticipate the system will be fully functional by fiscal 1986-87 year-end.

The asset control function is a high priority with ministry management, and with its co-operation the program is being implemented quickly and effectively. Once completed, this program will provide adequate controls to account for and safeguard the present, newly acquired, transferred and disposed movable assets of the ministry.

Mr. Sterling: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order: Will the Solicitor General clarify whether he was talking about movable assets or floating assets?

Mr. Speaker: I suggest the member can place that as a question at a later time.

RESPONSES

SUNDAY TRADING

Mr. O'Connor: I wish to reply to the Treasurer's announcement of the select committee on Sunday closings, finally, almost one year to the day after a similar announcement by this party of a similar task force, almost a year after that task force travelled to some 11 cities and towns in the province and heard more than 1,100 representations orally and in writing, and almost nine months after a comprehensive report was presented by that task force on this very subject. In the meantime, thousands of charges have been laid, thousands of retail employees have suffered unnecessarily through fear and uncertainty, and hundreds of thousands of dollars in legal fees have been spent by small businessmen across this province.

However, we welcome the announcement. I welcome the opportunity to sit as chairman of this task force, to listen to the people, to hear their views again, perhaps unnecessarily, to move as expeditiously as possible; and having heard all the views, to present to this House a

report I am sure will parallel quite closely the report of last year.

If the government had seen fit and had the guts and the foresight to adopt some of the provisions of last year's report, we could have avoided the unnecessary disruptions in the community to employees and employers.

SAFETY IN SPORTS

Mr. Rowe: In response to the minister of sportness and amateur fits with respect to his announcement today, we on this side of the House wonder where this has been, since I understand he has had it in his hands since September. However, it is good to see that the minister is prepared to spend \$1.4 million to train coaches and educate athletes, teachers and parents about the dangers of violence in sports. This is welcome news.

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However, we take great exception to the way the minister plans to enforce his new rules. To threaten to withhold funding from minor hockey league associations, or any other sports group for that matter, is, in our view at least, tantamount to blackmail. Instead of holding a gun to the head of responsible individuals, I believe the minister should work with them to resolve the problems. They are certainly prepared to listen to any constructive measures the government is prepared to take.

We wonder whatever happened to the fresh breeze the Premier (Mr. Peterson) is so fond of talking about blowing through these historic halls. Perhaps the member for London Centre should remind the minister of his commitment to open the doors at Queen's Park and consult with the people of the province. Instead of cutting off provincial government funding for sports groups across the province, the minister should increase funding to permit them to develop new ways to prevent sports injuries in future, as they have recommended to the minister in the past.

Why does the minister not sit down and discuss the problems of violence in sports with all representatives of the organizations in Ontario that have demonstrated over and over again not only their concern but also their commitment to resolve the problems? We say that without the support and encouragement of these groups, the minister's approach to solving sports injuries will come to a sorry end and thousands of young athletes will suffer as a result.

In conclusion, the only thing missing in this announcement is the name of the commissioner, and we do indeed wonder who he might be.

CONTROL OF SMOKING

Mr. Sterling: I would like to comment on the announcement by the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston) with regard to a smoking policy within the Ministry of Health. Since 1975, the World Health Organization has recognized that the cessation or the control of the habit of the smoking of cigarettes is the most preventive measure any government can take to improve the health of the citizens of this province or any other jurisdiction. It is amazing to me that it has taken until now for this minister to have even a scintilla of a nonsmoking policy.

Perhaps his response today came from the fact that I asked a question last fall about his smoking policy in health care institutions. His answer to me was that he had no policy with regard to smoking in his own health care institutions. It is a very sorry state when the Minister of Health does not even control the smoking within his own institutions.

In 1986, smoking by our young people increased by 20 per cent, while the Liberal government of Ontario sat there and did nothing. When is it going to do something real and positive in dealing with smoking in public and in the work place? It should call Bill 71 today.

SUNDAY TRADING

Mr. McClellan: The government House leader said he was announcing the establishment of a select committee on Sunday closings after discussions with the other House leaders. He did not indicate what we had replied. For the record, I replied that I thought it was stupid and unnecessary, if not bird-brained. I want to put that on the record.

If the government has some ideas or proposals, why does it not bring forward amendments to the legislation? We will debate them here in the House and have public hearings. But, of course, the government has no ideas or proposals. This is the same group that said a couple of weeks ago that it was incapable of establishing a select committee on plant closures, layoffs and shut-downs because it could not possibly find enough Liberals to sit on the committee.

All of a sudden, I guess, they have read the polls and have come to a different view about the relevance of this issue. We will agree to this committee, obviously, on the condition that the committee hold all its meetings on Sunday afternoons.

SAFETY IN SPORTS

Mr. Martel: This fight started about 1972 when we pushed Bill McMurtry into doing a

study on behalf of the government. It has been a long time coming, and I want to applaud the minister for the actions he is going to take.

The costs over the years have been astronomical. In Quebec, it is estimated they spend \$60 million a year on sports accidents. When one looks at the latest figures on the numbers of injuries to kids in Canada, there are now 94 young people, with a mean age of 17, of whom half are in wheelchairs for life, at a cost of \$1 million during their lifetime to look after them.

I applaud the government's move to try to reduce the violence in sports. From the information that was gathered, a lot of it owing to Dr. Tom Pashby, Dr. Charles Tator, the neurosurgeon, and a man who died about a year ago, Bob Firth, a magnificent young man who was a driving force and certainly a tremendous help to me in gathering the statistics and the material, I think we know how to get rid of that stuff, and it does not change the complexion of the game one iota. If you stop hitting from the rear and if you remove the use of the stick as a weapon, you will clear it up.

That is not far enough any more, because the minister was right. I got the latest statistics on the number of young people who have broken necks from diving. It was in the neighbourhood of 83 or 84 by 1983. I do not have the latest ones, but that is the latest figure I have, 83 kids with broken necks. We have to use the educational system to get at that, so we can educate kids that when they dive, they dive properly.

Have you ever tried to throw something out of your car today, now that teachers are teaching about the environment? Your kids will tell you, "Do not do it." I think that is one approach we have to take.

The other is the regulatory way my friend talks about. Working with the associations, we should establish a set of province-wide regulations for each sport. In the final analysis, I think we have to have the courage to say we have had enough of the goonism and are going to reduce it, no matter what it takes. We owe it to the kids, and I congratulate the minister.

CONTROL OF SMOKING

Mr. Rae: I want to respond to the statement by the Minister of Health, to indicate to him and to the House that what is remarkable is not how much we do as a society with respect to this major public health crisis, as well as with respect to the crisis on acquired immune deficiency syndrome, which is another major public crisis, but how little government is doing.

If one compares our efforts in terms of public education with the efforts of other governments, it is striking how very little we have begun to do in this province. It is a tough issue; it is not easy. There are many people who do not receive the assistance they need to receive to be able to stop smoking, but it is a major health problem and we need to take those human footsteps to see that we do it.

ORAL QUESTIONS

AUTO PACT

Mr. Grossman: My question is to the Premier. We understand the Premier announced to the media this morning that he had decided after all to go to Washington to speak about our trade interests. I could not help but note that when it came to jobs in northern Ontario, with regard to the softwood lumber issue, he and his ministers did not go to Washington. When it came to jobs in the north, no one went to Washington seeking to defend those jobs and our interests in softwood lumber. Now, on the auto pact question, he is offering, under pressure—let us face it—from the opposition parties, finally to do something to protect our auto industry before something happens.

I have a question for the Premier, who is very eager to portray himself as the sole and leading spokesperson defending the auto pact inside Canada as well as externally.

Hon. Mr. Grandmaître: He is.

Mr. Grossman: If he is, I have this question for him. Can the Premier tell us the names of three Canadians who think the auto pact should be renegotiated? Let him tell us three.

1410

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I am most grateful to the honourable member for his advice that I should travel more. I guess he has visions of his own trips on the Concorde when he was a minister and feels I should treat myself the same way.

I remind him we were in Washington about a year ago. We talked to the softwood lobby then, to a number of senators, and we will continue to do that. For some weeks or months it has been public knowledge that I am going to Washington in the next couple of weeks to deal with some of the issues that are there.

In fairness, I do not want to overemphasize the importance placed on our voice when we are in Washington. Obviously, we have a responsibility to take out the message as best we can in the circumstances, and I will try to do that. We try to be as effective as we can in that regard.

The member will recall at the first ministers' conference I suggested to his close friend, Mr. Mulroney, that we develop a national strategy on taking our message to Washington. So far he has chosen to disregard that advice, but I still think it is important and we all have a responsibility.

The member asked who wants to renegotiate the auto pact. I do not know of anyone, unless the member does. If he has decided today that he wants to do that, he should stand up and share the information with us. My concern is obvious. Pressure will be coming, and under pressure Miss Carney, the Prime Minister, Mr. Reisman and others may capitulate to alter the terms of that pact which is so important to Ontario.

Mr. Grossman: Let us be clear that we have established one thing on the auto pact, that there is no need for the Premier to try to position himself as the only person in Canada setting out to fight to maintain the auto pact. By his own words he has indicated this afternoon that no one in the federal government and no one in any province is advocating the renegotiation of the auto pact, so he need not get on his white charger to try to defend it.

I want to point out to the Premier that there is one Canadian who has long believed the auto pact should be renegotiated. On January 16, 1980, that person said the federal government should call a meeting immediately to determine what could be done to change the auto pact. On January 26, 1982, he said it was obviously time for a new deal. He talks about some of the most outrageous aspects of the original agreement and is very specific about it.

Mr. Speaker: Do you have a question?

Mr. Grossman: We have article after article about this Canadian.

Mr. Pope: Who is he?

Mr. Grossman: This Canadian is the Premier's new appointment as Deputy Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology, Patrick Lavelle.

Could the Premier tell us what he is going to say in Washington when the American United Auto Workers and the American congressmen quote the Premier's own deputy minister of industry as the person who believes the auto pact should be on the table and should be renegotiated?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: That may or may not be the case, but I speak for this government in that regard and the member knows our position on it.

Mr. Grossman: We remember the Premier's position on softwood lumber, which was to agree

to the imposition of a tax when his minister said it was good news that the tax was being put in at 15 per cent.

Given that the deputy minister of industry for Ontario, the Premier's appointee, has long believed that the auto pact should be renegotiated, and given that it was his direct employee David Barrows who opened up this question in a memo to Patrick Lavelle and talked about the renegotiation of the pact, does the Premier not think it is very crucial to the discussions that we and the public find out what is going on between Mr. Lavelle and the people in that ministry, and that the memo between Mr. Lavelle and his employee Mr. Barrows be made public immediately, so we, the federal government, and indeed the Americans, might know what is going on with regard to the Premier's true position?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I have trouble trying to understand what the member is getting at, whether he is suggesting that this government is not fulfilling its responsibilities or that something untoward is going on, that he is a seer far ahead of everyone else on these issues or that he is the only one standing up for the auto pact.

I do not understand the object of his line of questioning, but he misrepresented, albeit I am sure inadvertently, the nature of that memo from Mr. Barrows. It was a description of certain meetings that were going on at the federal level. It was leaked by someone, which I regret very much, but that is a reality and it is his interpretation of what was going on at another level. It was not a policy document in that sense. There are many documents that go with it and I do not think it is particularly constructive, because I know my honourable friend well enough that he would not read that document to twist it and to put some purposes on it that were not legitimate in the circumstances.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Grossman: I believe it is important to note that the Premier's position is that the people of Ontario, including the duly elected opposition party, cannot be trusted with a government memo and that we may misinterpret it. It is our responsibility to get those documents and to interpret them to the public.

Mr. Speaker: Is that your question?

Mr. Grossman: The Premier is hiding the document and that is outrageous.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Question.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr. Grossman: Yesterday, in the incredible whitewash report introduced in this House by the

Premier's minister, the position was taken by the persons who wrote the study that action should not be taken immediately and charges should not be laid immediately against those employers who have unsafe conditions in the work place. He will see why we put this question to him and not to the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye), so he cannot refer it, or he ought not.

How can the Premier reconcile the fact that he has boasted of cracking down with charges on nursing home operators, on people who pollute the environment, on people who open their stores on Sundays and indeed even on people who consume alcohol on boats, but when it comes to cracking down on people who create unsafe conditions in the work place, he says, "Let us just have a chat with them and give them a second or third chance"? How does he reconcile those positions?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I do not have the same difficulty the honourable member has. I do not believe any reconciliation is necessary. There are problems. We have brought in independent people to look at the situation. The member has called it a whitewash. He is entitled to do that. Other people do not share his view. He calls anything that does not agree with him a whitewash. I understand what he says, but I do not believe there is anything that is difficult to comprehend there. We are moving on the situation, as the minister said.

Mr. Grossman: In an attempt to reconcile this, I believe the onus lies upon the Premier to tell the people who are working in these circumstances in the various work places in this province why, if they find themselves in a community where someone opens a bookstore on Sunday, a charge will be laid immediately, as if there were some immediate danger to the community; why, when someone pollutes the environment, he is quite properly charged and subject to huge fines the first time, not just the second or third time; and why, in the case of them having a relative in a nursing home, his government will crack down immediately to protect that resident in the nursing home; but if they are looking at unsafe conditions in their work place, the Premier says: "As an injured worker, you do not quite rank with someone who wants to buy a book on Sunday; you do not quite rank with a senior citizen in a nursing home." How does he reconcile the different standards he has?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: It is interesting. The member brings up a number of things he would like to compare it to; for example, nursing

homes, polluters or people who Sunday shop. He will be aware that we inherited a number of problems from his administration and we have taken action in a wide variety of them. This is another one. I am not very happy with the situation that was there, but I believe we have seen a minister who is committed to solving the problems. If the member stands here and tries to tell me that it has developed in the last year and a half, he would further erode what little credibility he has.

Mr. Grossman: We sympathize with the problems the Premier inherited; they are all sitting right behind him.

I want to say seriously to the Premier—

Mr. Speaker: By way of supplementary.

Mr. Grossman: I want to ask the Premier this final question. Quite apart from his front-end-loaded response, as in a tape cassette, that he inherited a lot of problems, the fact is that he has had almost two years to deal with those problems. The fact is that when it comes to cracking down on bookstore owners who want to open on Sunday, he is there with a quick headline and a crackdown. When it comes to nursing homes, he is there with a crackdown. When it comes to polluters, he is there with a crackdown. And yes, Attorney General (Mr. Scott), when it comes to drinking on a boat, he is there with a crackdown.

Mr. Speaker: And the question is?

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Mr. Grossman: When it comes to injured workers, the Premier is willing to back off and let his minister give employers two, three and four chances. It is not enough for the Premier to say he inherited problems; he has had two years. How does he reconcile the different standards?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: If the Leader of the Opposition does not think we are doing well enough after 18 months actually, not two years, why does he want to give us another four years to do the job? I would think he would want a change.

AUTO PACT

Mr. Rae: I would like to ask the Premier about the auto pact. I am sure he will know that the chief trade negotiator for the United States, Mr. Murphy, announced today in a speech that it is his view that the auto pact is on the table. It is clearly documented now that a working group has been set up to look at the auto trade.

The Premier has stated on a number of occasions that Ontario has a veto with respect to

free trade negotiations. Is it still the Premier's view that Ontario has a veto? If that is still his view, why does he not use it when it will be most effective and when it will work? It would give a very clear message to everybody that as far as Ontario and the people of Ontario are concerned, our auto industry is not up for grabs.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I have expressed the view that I believe *de facto* the provinces have a veto. As the honourable member knows, a number of things are being and will be discussed under the bilateral trade negotiations that will fall under provincial purview and responsibility. By virtue of that fact and the implementation of a treaty, the provinces would have a veto.

In broad terms, the provinces do not have the power to make treaties. The federal government has that responsibility, but in the final result it will require the support of the provinces. That has always been my view, as the member knows. That power cannot be exercised at this time but only in the final result. Regardless of what my position is, the federal government is in a position to proceed. As the member for York South knows, it has followed its own course on a number of issues in spite of the advice it has received from Ontario and other jurisdictions.

I am taking the opportunity to express as strongly as I can the view shared by my friend opposite, which I am glad he shares, that the auto pact should not be renegotiated. In spite of the pressure from Mr. Murphy, Mr. Yeutter, Mr. Merkin or anyone else, it is working well and we should not renegotiate that pact.

Mr. Rae: It is not a *de facto* veto; it is an *after de facto* veto. That is the problem we have with the Premier's approach. If he has a veto, what is the point of having it if he is not prepared to use it on behalf of the people of Ontario when it is going to be most effective, when it is going to get that issue off the table? By the time he decides to exercise his *de facto* veto, it will be *after de facto* and it will be too late. That is the problem we face right now.

The Premier and his government are giving a mixed message. The message is that talks will continue; he will continue to be buddy-buddy with Brian Mulroney; he will continue to participate; he will continue to whisper sweet nothings in his ear; yet at the same time he pretends to be standing up for the people of Ontario. He is not standing up for anybody because he is not exercising the power to do something with the auto pact when it can be done.

Why is the Premier not prepared to move with respect to the auto pact at the time when it is going to be most effective, that is to say, right now?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: The message may be unclear to my friend opposite, but I do not think it is unclear to anyone else, including the Prime Minister, Miss Carney or Mr. Reisman. I do not accept that point of view.

Mr. Rae: It certainly is unclear; they do not take you seriously.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I think they know very well where we stand on the issue. They may take the honourable member far more seriously than they take me, I have no idea, but I am glad we are at one on this issue.

He asks me to exercise my *de facto* veto, not to do it *ex post facto*, but to do it now. I am telling him it does not exist at this time. I could do what he does, which is to hoot and holler. I do on occasion, and I express our views as strongly as I possibly can. I think the trade negotiators know that. It is nice to have the support of all members of this House.

If the member stands up and if the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Grossman) stands up and puts his views very clearly to his close friend and associate Mr. Mulroney, whom he supports sometimes on free trade and sometimes he does not, then Mr. Mulroney would know very clearly where Ontario stands. I think it is an important enough issue that we put partisan politics aside and we all stand up together with a united voice on this issue.

Mr. Rae: Let me make it very clear to the Premier that we are not at one with him in this province, because he and his party have consistently gone along with the talks. They have a number of people in cabinet who are clearly in favour of free trade. The Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) stated at McMaster University that he is in favour of free trade and in favour of the negotiations. Those facts are clearly on the record.

We are not at one with this government, because this government is not prepared to do the necessary thing and stand up for the auto workers in the province, the industry that employs 15 per cent of the working people of this province. The Premier is prepared to talk about it but he is not prepared to do anything about it.

What precisely is he prepared to do with respect to the discussions that are now ongoing, with respect to the detailed negotiations that he knows, as well as I do, are taking place between Mr. Reisman's team and the American team with respect to the auto industry in particular? What is

he specifically prepared to do to get the auto pact right off the table? What is he going to do about it?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I think my honourable friend has inadvertently misrepresented the position of the Treasurer on this issue. Obviously, this is a trading province. Ninety-five per cent of our exports go to the United States and all of us are in favour of enhanced access or selling more to the US. But we are very worried about the things that have been transpiring in Ottawa and the potential price the federal government is prepared to pay. That is why we are watching this so very clearly. That is why we are putting forward our views on all occasions.

I am not carrying the negotiations. The member may not take our views seriously but I think the people in Ottawa do. The member may think there are some problems here but I do not think the Canadian auto workers or the automotive companies think this government is letting down the industry. As a matter of fact, I believe all of them have a great deal of respect for the way this government has stuck up for the auto workers and the auto industry to recognize its importance. I defy the member to contradict that.

Mr. Rae: There is a one-word answer to what the Premier has just said and that is it is just baloney. He cannot be taken with any degree of credibility on this question. He is doing as much for the auto industry as he did for the lumber workers.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr. Rae: My question is of the Minister of Labour. Can he explain why he endorsed a report yesterday in such glowing terms, why he embraced the philosophy of a report yesterday in such glowing terms when the report states, and I quote, "For them"—that is to say, he is referring to those members of the Red Guard, those with the hidden agenda, all those who are apparently the subversives in the system—"enforcement of occupational health and safety legislation should be no different than enforcement of the Highway Traffic Act or even the Criminal Code."

Can he explain why he has endorsed a statement that appears to be saying those who believe the law should be enforced are subversive and those who believe the law should not be enforced should be encouraged? Can he tell us why that kind of philosophy has his support?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I want to suggest that my friend is engaged in some excessive rhetoric, and I think he is. If the member went back and looked carefully at my statement, he would find I stated

there was much that was sensible in the proposals that Mr. McKenzie put out which will enable us to enhance our delivery of health and safety in terms of a new inspectorate, in terms of training that inspectorate, in terms of decentralization, the last proposal one which was put forward by the Ontario Public Service Employees Union in its submission. I want to congratulate OPSEU for doing so. There is much to find of praise in that aspect of the report.

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As to the philosophical tone of the report, the tone that is set in the executive summary on page iii, as the honourable gentleman pointed out yesterday and as he points out again today, those are Mr. McKenzie's views. They are the views that Mr. McKenzie, as an individual in a democratic society, has every right to put; but let there be no mistake that the philosophy of this government that the act will be rigorously enforced, something that never happened while that bunch was over here, that philosophy—

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The member for York South would like to ask a supplementary if the members will allow him the opportunity.

Mr. Rae: The minister is engaged in a form of rewriting history after only 24 hours. Yesterday he was prepared to stand up and say the report justified everything he had been doing, that it justified his joining the attack on those so-called subversives who are opposed to what the government has been doing and who have some real criticisms to make. That kind of distancing operation is not going to work.

You are part and parcel of this, buddy, and you are going to have to answer for it.

Mr. Speaker: Question.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: That is a really good question. What kind of question is that?

Interjections.

Mr. Rae: Just to satisfy the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) who is very unhappy with his position on free trade, and I can understand why he is so unhappy, I would like to ask the Minister of Labour a specific question. Is it his view and the view of the government that the Occupational Health and Safety Act should be enforced just like the Criminal Code and the Highway Traffic Act?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: It is the view of this minister and this government that the Occupational Health and Safety Act should be enforced with all the vigour at the government's disposal. I know

what the member is speaking about. At the risk of making this a little longer, I want to read a sentence or two from the executive summary, in which, having spoken of another agenda, the authors say: "The visibility of this minority group in the labour movement has been enhanced by the change of government. When in opposition, and even now in power, members of the government have, on occasion, sided with those who favour the 'big-stick' approach to occupational health and safety administration."

If the authors were speaking of the Minister of Labour, so be it. I accept and welcome that criticism, if that is what criticism is. Let me share with the leader and with the members of the House a couple of statistics. In 1984-85, under the previous government, there were 278 recommendations for prosecution in a whole year. In 1985-86, that number went up to 387 as a result of a new prosecutions policy that substantially increased it in the last month. In the first eight months of this year, the number is 462.

Mr. Rae: Out of 80,000 infractions, out of tens of thousands of infractions, including repeat violations, the minister brings forward the pathetic numbers of 10s and 20s and 300 or 400 and says, "Look what a wonderful job we have done." There is a worker dying in this province every working day as a result of what is happening on the job and the minister turns around and takes pride and satisfaction. It is a disgrace to have a minister standing in his place and not recognizing that there is a colossal problem and a structural problem here.

Can the minister explain what I see as an enormous contradiction in the report and in the minister's own approach? Does the minister share the view of the report that the internal responsibility system is doing a marvellous job and is very successful the way it is? If that is his view, can he explain why there are still workers today who are working without the benefit of a health and safety committee and who are being subject to exposure to toxic substances without regard to regulation and protection?

Can he explain why that is still happening, and can he tell us what his internal responsibility system will do for those workers who do not have the benefit of a union and bargaining power to deal with those problems?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: First, it would be nice if the leader of the third party, who earlier talked about a death a day and now talks about a death every working day, would at least start getting his facts somewhat correct. A cheap shot is fine but accurate facts would be more appreciated. The

fact of the matter is that one death is one too many and all of us share that view.

The second fact is that in 1986 we will have recorded the second lowest number of fatalities in this decade of the 1980s, I believe. We are going to try to lower that figure dramatically in 1987 and we are going to have to work at that.

Is the internal responsibility system working as well as it ought to? The short answer is no. The longer answer is the report and the proposals in it for more inspectors and better training with more rigorous prosecution where that is appropriate. That direction will allow an internal responsibility system to work from government's end, from the worker's end—

Mr. Martel: Either you give the workers the power or you have got nothing.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I hear my friend the member for Sudbury East (Mr. Martel) talking about worker power. From the worker's end and from the end of the work place—

Mr. Speaker: The interjection is out of order. Order.

Mr. Martel: You could not hire enough inspectors, but the Solicitor General has 5,000 OPP and there are fewer accidents on the highways.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The member for Sudbury East is wasting another member's time.

CONTROL OF SMOKING

Mr. Sterling: I have a question of the Minister of Health. What is the minister's commitment to educating our young people and other people of Ontario on the hazards of smoking tobacco?

Hon. Mr. Elston: I do not have our numbers with respect to what has been spent, but I can tell the honourable member that the efforts of the ministry are considerable in educating people in healthy lifestyles. We do have programs that indicate that we share a need to develop styles of living that will encourage healthy activities on the part of our young people.

We have developed a couple of very public committees which are helping us to establish goals for healthy Ontarians, which will include not only young people but also all the people of Ontario so that we can measure progress towards a healthier Ontario.

Mr. Sterling: According to the minister's own ministry, expenditures on public education programs on smoking for 1984-85, the last year of the previous administration, were \$1,240,000. This year to date, with three months to go, he has spent \$69,600 on public education.

That is a decrease of 94 per cent. Does the minister consider that an adequate commitment on the part of his government to attack the number one health care problem in this province?

Hon. Mr. Elston: The member will want to acknowledge that one of the things that happens with respect to expenditures for communications is that materials are generated at particular times and we renew the production of those materials when those materials are depleted.

The member would also like to know that we are taking initiatives in our ministry to deal specifically with healthy lifestyles right throughout the province, not only with respect to smoking but also with respect to other sorts of activities that will encourage healthier living styles to be adopted, not only by young people but also by seniors and others right throughout the province.

We have provided for various of our facilities sums of money to assist them to develop policies that will help them. I had already noted in our statement earlier that one particular facility in the Ministry of Health has already gone towards the smoke-free work place and has established very credible standards for the rest of the ministry facilities and for the rest of the people throughout the province.

Our commitment is not measured in dollars but in activities, and we have many activities that will encourage people to adopt very healthy lifestyles throughout Ontario.

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OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr. Martel: I have a question for the Minister of Labour. By the way, I happen to have the statistics for the past three years on fatalities in the work place. These are taken from the minister's own report; he can argue that they are not. There were 257 in 1984, 168 in 1985 and 248 in 1986, up to the end of November. That is from the minister's own report. If he wants me to send him the sheets, I will send him the sheets. The minister is silly.

Mr. Speaker: Do you have a question?

Mr. Martel: I have a question.

Mr. Speaker: I thought that was your question.

Mr. Martel: I just wanted to correct the record, since he went after my leader in the way he did on his figures.

On a number of occasions, I have asked the Minister of Labour for this report on the functioning of joint health and safety commit-

tees, which has been sitting in his office gathering dust for about eight months. It is supposed to make up part of the minister's Advisory Council on Occupational Health and Occupational Safety report, which happens to be about eight months late under the standing orders of this Legislature.

Why did the minister allow McKenzie to quote extensively from a document the minister is not prepared to make public and to justify some of the silliness in his stupid report that denigrates the workers in this province?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I guess the honourable gentleman does not agree with Mr. McKenzie's proposal that there be a \$5,000 minimum fine for failure to establish a joint health and safety committee. I guess he does not support that kind of proposal because that would be part of a stupid report and one of 74 useless recommendations.

I think that recommendation is kind of useful. Obviously, that document has provided some useful insights. The honourable gentleman will have a chance to see it shortly. I believe there was some other material we are waiting for before the full report and I apologize for its being late.

I regret I did not hear this yesterday, because I met with the council this morning, but I will attempt to get this matter tabled and to get to the member as quickly as possible the information he desires.

Mr. Martel: The minister is such a figure skater he would make Toller Cranston look bad.

The survey reveals the poor functioning of joint health and safety committees and the lack of compliance, but there is one part of this report that bothers me. McKenzie, with his pro-management bias throughout his entire report, contradicts the surprising findings of this survey. Let me quote just one part. On page 138 of the survey, it states:

"No clear evidence was found for a negative effect for overlap between joint health and safety committees and labour relations structures. This nonfinding goes strongly against the views held by Dr. Ham and Kevin Burkett on the labour relations and joint health and safety committees."

As a result of this statement, McKenzie then says in his report—

Mr. Speaker: Question?

Mr. Martel: In the executive summary he states, "Representatives from joint health and safety committees] should be selected from among those who are not involved in the collective bargaining process...."

In other words, does the minister not understand that what the survey, which he will not make public, says is where there are strong health and safety committees backed by a strong union, there is better health and safety? What this bird McKenzie is doing is recommending that we separate the two and make eunuchs of them.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: It is an interesting point of view. As usual, my friend the member for Sudbury East and members of his party and his caucus are only worried about unionized work places; I am worried about all work places.

There are honest differences of opinion on this question, as the honourable gentleman knows. He puts one point of view. On the other hand, the leadership of Local 2251, the steelworkers union from Algoma in Sault Ste. Marie, came to me and argued exactly the opposite, that industrial and labour relations and the health and safety committees should not be intertwined. That is the argument they made to me. Mr. McKenzie has made his comments, and we will be responding in due course with whatever changes we deem to be appropriate.

PEEL AFTERCARE RESOURCES

Mr. Callahan: In the private members' statements, the member for Lincoln (Mr. Andrewes) made a statement about the Peel Aftercare Resources program that was, I believe, incorrect. I would like to ask the Minister of Health whether there has been an increase in the funds available to the region of Peel for the worthy following of the Peel Aftercare Resources program; and if so, how much?

Hon. Mr. Elston: I am unable to provide the figures for the honourable gentleman, but that is one of the programs which have been funded. There has been an increase, and a recent announcement has taken place to indicate that has occurred. I thank the member for Brampton for raising that in the House and for his active and very worthwhile suggestions, in addition to the other advice received with respect to the community mental health programs, which saw an increase of about \$5.6 million across the province for those very worthwhile programs.

OVERCROWDING IN SCHOOLS

Mr. Davis: I have a question for the Minister of Education. Does he believe the provincial capital grants allocation will significantly improve the overcrowding conditions now experienced by many schools in Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Conway: In the new year, I welcome the question of the honourable gentle-

man opposite, who has during the past number of months indicated publicly what he thought this government's capital allocation would be for 1987. I think it was in Cambridge a few months ago that he predicted this government would be allocating no more than \$50 million for 1987. The reality is the member for Scarborough Centre recalls that number because it was the flat line the previous administration offered. This government, recognizing the concerns that teachers, students, parents and administrators have properly presented, will be allocating \$147 million in 1987.

It is true that allocation will not solve all the difficulties, but it will turn around a situation, a decade of neglect, for which the previous administration is responsible and which, through the generosity of the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon), we in this government will continue to recognize.

Mr. Davis: I am glad the Minister of Education reads my reports and statements, because without them he probably would have given only the \$50 million, as he indicated.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Make that into a sermon.

Mr. Davis: Yes, I can work on that too.

In the York Region Board of Education system, 8,000 students' classrooms are located in 300 portables. As of September 1987, 2,300 more students will move into an additional 100 portables. In the York Region Roman Catholic Separate School Board system, 6,400 students are located in 215 portables, and in September 1987 an additional 1,000 students will be moved into portables because of the inaction of this government.

Why does the minister believe the increase in the number of portables for 15,000 students in only the publicly funded school boards of York region is an improvement in the overcrowding conditions experienced by students and teachers in this province?

Hon. Mr. Conway: One wonders why, if the opposition felt so strongly about portables, it tolerated more than 4,000 portables in Ontario in 1984-85.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. There are many members who would like to ask questions. Please do not waste time.

1450

Hon. Mr. Conway: I thought "PC" meant "Progressive Conservative," not "perpetual cacophony."

In 1986 the York boards received something like \$65 million of our allocation, 28 per cent of

the total. In 1987, of \$147 million allocated, I expect, having just met with many in the York school community, that this community will be receiving a very large share of a much-increased allocation. People such as the member for York North, my colleague the Minister of Colleges and Universities (Mr. Sorbara), among others on this side, have been very aggressive and very effective in drawing to the attention of this government the particular concerns of that great community.

DAY CARE

Ms. Gigantes: My question is for the Minister of Community and Social Services. I would ask the minister why he and his ministry are refusing to provide at least the provincial share of the more than four per cent increase in spending that needs to go on in Metro Toronto to cover costs already incurred to provide day care centre services that are already too skimpy.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: Metro Toronto, like all other municipalities in the province, was advised in November and December 1985 that, for the 1986 calendar year, the increase that would be available would be four per cent. We finalized our negotiations with Metro Toronto in June and July 1986 and confirmed once again that the limitation would be four per cent. Despite that fact, day care centres in Metro Toronto, with or without the approval of the municipality—I do not know—went ahead and incurred expenses beyond four per cent. We simply cannot be responsible when any agency or municipality takes that particular course of action.

The second point I would make is that Metro Toronto has received considerable support and considerable resources for day care from this ministry. As a matter of fact, there was an increase in 1986 of approximately 2,900 new subsidized spaces at a cost to this ministry in excess of \$10 million.

Ms. Gigantes: Mr. Speaker, you will recall that this is the minister who promised us in June 1986 that we were going to have a white paper on day care and expanded services in this province. Why is he now putting all his effort into scrimping and saving every penny out of a Ministry of Community and Social Services budget that has been underspent on day care for the past several years? What is it to him at this stage to cut back services? That is going to be the effect of this refusal to provide the 30 per cent contribution. Why at this stage is the minister willing to squeeze the system in Metro when he

knows it is already inadequate and he has not produced anything tangible for the future?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: The honourable member may very well be correct that in previous years there was a cutback in services for day care, or an underspending, if that is the expression she used; I do not have those figures. However, I can tell her there certainly has not been an underexpenditure in the past 18 months. There has been a considerable increase in expenditure. There has been an increase of 10,000 subsidized spaces in Ontario, which is an overall increase of 50 per cent from what the system had when we became part of the government.

I can also remind the honourable member that there has been an increase in services available for community resource centres. There has been an additional number of rural pilot programs. There has been a partial settlement at least of the indirect subsidy problem; and we are dealing at the moment with the federal government to increase vastly the services that are going to be made available in this province.

FARM CHEMICALS

Mr. McGuigan: My question is for the Solicitor General. I raised this question a little later than this a year ago during the agricultural chemical season. This year we are just starting that season. I want to ask the Solicitor General—

Mr. Gillies: Just turn around and ask him.

Mr. McGuigan: Through you, Mr. Speaker, I want the message to go out to everyone in Ontario.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. McGuigan: The members opposite are not concerned about safety and the dangers in stealing agricultural chemicals. I happen to be concerned about this and so I am asking the minister here in the Legislature.

Mr. Speaker: And the question is?

Mr. McGuigan: Farmers who unwittingly buy these chemicals are laying themselves open to the charge of receiving stolen goods. I wonder whether the Ontario Provincial Police and the industry can set up a program to try to guard these chemicals and prevent their theft.

Hon. Mr. Keyes: The issue of safety does not appear to be of much concern to some of the members opposite, but it certainly is to the members on this side. It is a problem not only in this province; it also happens to be one in Manitoba. When this was drawn to our attention last year, we checked whether any other pro-

grams existed. One is conducted in Manitoba by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, with whom we have been conversing to see how effective it can be.

We have already set up some potential seminars with the manufacturers of these farm chemicals. The first of a series will be held on March 10, 1987, in Chatham so that farmers in the area and distributors and manufacturers of the commodity can discuss how best to deal with the issue.

Mr. McGuigan: Farmers are not likely to buy these chemicals once they have been taken out of the original cartons. I am wondering whether we can set up a system of coding or marking the cartons so the chemicals can be traced and the people who are involved in the theft apprehended.

Hon. Mr. Keyes: The idea is appropriate. One of the areas the manufacturers are using is that all the containers in which these are marketed will show who has the authority to sell these chemicals. Such an identification not only will help in any future identification of goods stolen but will also assist purchasers to know they are buying from authorized people.

DRINKING AND DRIVING

Mr. Ashe: I have a question for the Attorney General, who is quoted in this morning's paper as being concerned about an Ontario Court of Appeal decision that he indicates might undermine the province's tough drinking and driving laws. He will be aware that last Friday in a courtroom in Durham a judge passed sentence for a conviction on four counts of dangerous driving causing death, one count of causing bodily harm and running a stop sign and failure to provide a breath sample. In fact, this same driver of this truck admitted drinking prior to the accident. The sentence handed out was two years less a day. Is that the Attorney General's idea of fair justice in this province?

Hon. Mr. Scott: As the honourable member knows, justice in this province is administered by independent judges. Thousands of decisions are given by these judges every day, most of which are found to be entirely satisfactory to the general public. Every once in a while a decision strikes crown law officers or members of the public as unreasonable or as an inappropriate response to a difficult problem. Our only remedy in that circumstance is to conduct an appeal so the Ontario Court of Appeal can review the sentence. In the case to which the member refers and other cases like it, we ask the crown attorney to make a

report to determine whether an appeal should be taken to the Court of Appeal. I want the member to know that we are as vigilant as we can be in trying to ensure a high standard is achieved.

1500

Mr. Ashe: Can the Attorney General confirm and assure me and assure Ben Grunert, who lost his wife and daughter, and Judy Gerrard, who lost her husband and daughter, that this will be appealed? I just cannot understand two years less a day. It is already on the record that the crown attorney is recommending that an appeal be made. I understand that the final decision is in the Attorney General's hands. As I understand the parole system, this fellow, who killed four people, could be out of jail in eight months.

Hon. Mr. Scott: As the member perhaps knows, before a decision is made with respect to an appeal—and this is the inflexible practice in every case, not only under this government but also under the previous government—it is in every instance appropriate to review the recommendation of the crown attorney who conducted the case, which the honourable member has already noted, the reasons for decision that the trial judge has given and a note of the evidence as to whether those reasons for decision are supported or not. We review all that material in every case to assure that fairness is done not only to the victims but also to the accused and to the determination that the learned judge has made.

I can assure the honourable member that before the time limit for an appeal expires, a determination will be made as to whether an appeal will be taken, and I will be glad to notify him as soon as that decision is made so that he can assure his constituents.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Mr. Wildman: I have a question for the Minister of the Environment. In view of the concern, division and uncertainty among the people of Wawa, can the minister give us a date when he will announce his decision on whether he intends to designate the proposed Great Lakes power project on the Magpie River for environmental assessment?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: The member is quite correct in saying there has been some interest on the part of certain people within the community of Wawa regarding an environmental assessment of this private sector project. Representations have been made to the ministry from people on both sides of the issue. The member who represents the town of Wawa is aware of the conflicting points of view and the efforts of the

proponent in this case to follow the environmental assessment process.

I hope that in the very near future a decision will be announced on this matter, and one that will take into account the viewpoints that have been expressed by all concerned.

Mr. Wildman: Considering the fact that the minister has had the report of his advisory committee since September and has had a report by Acres International for the company since November, can he be more specific than saying "in the near future"?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I thought "in the near future" was pretty definitive in terms of the kinds of questions that are asked.

I should tell the member, however, that one of the processes one goes through—and the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Grossman) knows this from his many years on this side of the House—is that each of the ministries which has an involvement in this provides information commenting on whether the proponent's proposal is advantageous to the region and whether it will have an adverse environmental impact.

Mr. Grossman: You can use that excuse or you can do something.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I am glad the Leader of the Opposition interjects, because I cannot recall any project they placed under the Environmental Assessment Act in the private sector.

However, I will try to answer the question rather the interjections. My ministry is looking very carefully at all of these proposals and assessing them. I use the term "in the near future."

Mr. Wildman: By the end of the month?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: Certainly that would be in the near future.

MAISONS D'ÉDITION

M. Poirier: J'aurais une question pour la ministre des Affaires civiques et culturelles.

En ce moment, les maisons d'édition ne sont pas tenues de payer une taxe de vente fédérale. Apparemment, le gouvernement fédéral s'apprêterait à présenter, en 1988, d'une façon uniforme, une taxe de transfert pour les commerces. Il va sans dire que ce geste inquiète vivement les maisons d'édition ontariennes.

Ma question est à titre de membre du Comité des adjoints parlementaires pour la petite entreprise. Je voudrais savoir auprès de la ministre si elle a bien regardé ce dossier et ce qu'elle et son ministère et mon gouvernement s'apprêteraient à

faire dans ce dossier, auprès du gouvernement fédéral.

Hon. Ms. Munro: The honourable member asked a very important question to publishers but also to cultural industries right across Canada. Publishers in general are a rather beleaguered lot, and we should appreciate that. Not only is the ability of the federal government to continue its introduction of the business transfer tax to be feared, but we should also take a look at other types of federal action, including its action on Bill 58, the recent increase in postal rates, and on and on.

As minister, my action has been to impress on my federal colleagues the significant net effect of this move on the publishing industry. I am continuing to work with our colleagues to press for a continued exemption of the sales tax and the proposed business transfer tax.

NUCLEAR SAFETY

Mr. Gordon: I have a question to the first minister. There appears to be confusion in his cabinet about how he is going to handle nuclear issues, and it is exemplified by the recent announcement of the Minister of Energy (Mr. Kerrio) with regard to a commission to look at nuclear safety. Could he explain to the House just exactly what the policy is in this government when it comes to nuclear safety?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: There is no confusion at all over here. The confusion is in the honourable member's party, he and the member for Durham West (Mr. Ashe). I understand that when this member stood up to ask a question, the member for Durham West turned around and mouthed some obscenities about his contribution on the issue. My advice to the member is that he discuss it with his colleagues, discuss it at caucus next week, and we will be most anxious to have his views on that or any other subject, if they ever become united.

Mr. Gordon: I am not going to lecture the Premier the way he just lectured me. However, is that his advice to those witnesses who came before the select committee on energy and said they were very concerned about the disposal of nuclear waste, the transportation of heavy water with tritium in it across this province and the export of heavy water in this province? Is that what he is going to tell those witnesses? We want to know what the Premier is going to do for safety in this province.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I can assure my friend opposite that this government is very concerned about those issues. He will be aware of what has

happened with the independent review of the safety of the nuclear plants. It is an issue we take extremely seriously, and I am delighted to hear that he takes it seriously as well. However, I am saying I have not always seen that over there because sometimes when he stands up the members from Durham and the members around Darlington absolutely cringe. When he stands up, they turn apoplectic, not knowing what he may say. He is embarrassing them in their own ridings.

I am trying to help out the member politically, and I am saying he should discuss it with those members. When he comes to us with a united view, we will discuss it. This government has demonstrated a great commitment to environmental issues, to the issues of safety, and we are anxious to have his views at any time.

PETITION

SNOWPLOUGHING

Mr. Turner: I have a petition addressed to the honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"We would like to add our support to the proposal that the Ministry of Transportation and Communications plough the snow back off the sidewalks at the same time that the highway is ploughed for the safety of the school children and the citizens of Bailieboro. We will not object to snow being pushed on to our lawns and driveways."

This petition is supported by the attached copies of letters from the township of South Monaghan and the municipality of the township of Cavan.

I support it wholly.

1510

MOTION

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved that in the standing committee on general government, the supplementary estimates of the Ministry of Transportation and Communications be considered for one sitting on Thursday morning, January 15, 1987, to be taken before the completion of the estimates of the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology.

Motion agreed to.

INTRODUCTION OF BILL

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY ACT

Mr. Shymko moved first reading of Bill 187, An Act to proclaim Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Shymko: I am most pleased and honoured to be able to present this bill in the House. I trust that Ontario will once again provide leadership in honouring Martin Luther King Jr. for his commitment to the ideals of equality and justice in human rights.

The bill is a logical extension of the work done by the Martin Luther King Jr. Day Commemoration Committee in organizing events beginning on January 19. I hope that through unanimous agreement of the three parties this could be passed prior to January 19.

By honouring Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., we simultaneously honour Ontario's black community for its contribution to our society in the pursuit of tolerance, justice, equality and opportunity of all.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ADOPTION DISCLOSURE STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Sweeney moved second reading of Bill 165, An Act to amend the Child and Family Services Act, 1984, and certain other Acts in relation to Adoption Disclosure.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I have a few comments. May I begin by thanking my honourable critics for agreeing to debate this part of the Child and Family Services Act and to limit our debate strictly to the adoption disclosure issue.

The question of adoption disclosure is one that affects a significant number of people in our population. Our best estimate at the moment is that there are approximately 100,000 adults in Ontario who would be eligible to receive information as a result of this new legislation.

If one adds to that the adopting parents, the birth parents, the birth brothers and sisters and birth grandparents, we are talking of a significant portion of the population. What we do not know for certain is how many of these people are going to take advantage of the opportunities that I hope this legislation will offer to them. That is something that only time will tell.

Recent investigations by Dr. Ralph Garber, upon whose recommendations many of the proposals in this legislation rest, indicated that less than 10 per cent of adult adoptees seek disclosure information. Basically, we are look-

ing at two kinds of figures: on the one hand, a very large number of people who potentially could take advantage of this opportunity and, on the other hand, a relatively smaller percentage of those people who, from experience in other jurisdictions in Canada, in the US and in Europe, actually do take advantage of it. Nevertheless, the number of people in our population whom it affects is very considerable.

Let me take a minute to review the people who are primarily concerned with this legislation. First of all, let it be clearly understood that we are talking about the disclosure of adoption information to adults only. We are not talking, and I repeat that very clearly, about disclosure of information to children, but to adults only. Whether they be adopted persons, birth parents, brothers or sisters, grandparents or adoptive parents, in all cases we are talking about adults and about the free flow of information affecting and concerning their own lives.

We often hear the term "adoption triangle," which means the adopted person, the birth parent or parents and the adoptive parents. Those are the people who primarily have a concern, a say and an interest in this kind of legislation and this kind of disclosure. The adopted person at some point in his life had a decision made about him over which he had relatively little say or relatively little control. We know at one time our society had the sense that once that decision was made to adopt, from that point on all information, all records would be sealed, kept secret and totally confidential. That was the mood and attitude of our society then.

I suggest that has changed in the past 20 years. We are now in a society which is more open and recognizes that people should have access to information that affects their lives. That is what we are saying in this piece of legislation. We are saying that adopted people, who at one point in their lives had decisions made about them over which they had little say and little control, should now be in a situation to have access to information about those decisions and about the significant adults who were part of the decisions. That is the one side of the debate.

The other side of the debate deals with the birth parents, mother or father—in most cases, it is the mother—who made a decision 20 years or 30 years ago, and in some cases, from the letters that have been sent to our office, 50 or 60 years ago, about themselves and about their child. We were not party to that decision. That decision was a very personal one and, in many cases, a very difficult one; however, it was made.

At one time, with respect to confidentiality and secrecy, we said to those birth parents: "Once you make that decision, that part of your life is over and done with, finished. It is as if you never had that child, and from this day forward no information will ever be made available to you." Just as we can say with respect to an adopted person that once that decision has been made on his behalf that information will never be made available to him again and see the unfairness of that decision, so also we can say it with respect to the birth parent.

The decision was made at a time in her life—or in his and her life if it was a joint decision of two parents—but the decision was made 20 years ago, 30 years ago or 40 years ago. We know from talking to these parents that they have a continuing interest in their child. They know they have given up control or responsibility for that child, but they have not given up their interest in that child, the desire to keep knowing what has happened to that child, the desire to know whether they made the right decision, whether their child has lived a happy life, whether their adopting placement has been a satisfactory one.

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Finally, we are talking about the adoptive parent or parents: parents who once again made a decision 10, 15, 20 or 30 years ago to welcome into their homes and into their hearts another human being and to treat that child as if he or she were their own child. At that point, for some people it was a very important decision and it has affected their lives for many years in their relationships with each other, the relationships with that child, the relationships with other members of their family. For a long time, those adoptive parents have provided love and support and encouragement and assumed responsibility for the child as if that child were their own.

What I am trying to suggest is that all of these partners in the adoptive process have a legal claim on our attention, have a right to our attention, have a right to have their voices heard. What we have attempted to do in this legislation is to balance those claims, to say at one time that the adopted person has the right to know; to say at the same time that the birth parent, if she chooses, has a right to her privacy and her confidentiality; to recognize the role of the adopted parent as long as the adopted person is a child but not when that adopted person becomes an adult, that is where we draw the distinction.

We are also recognizing in this legislation for the first time the role and the claim of birth brothers and sisters of an adopted person and

birth grandparents of an adopted person. That leads me to ask members to go back with me a short time and to reflect on the history of this debate. I see some of my colleagues in the House now who participated in those previous debates back in 1977 and 1978 when there was a complete revision of the child welfare legislation and when, for the first time in law in Ontario, provision was made to disclose adoption information.

Prior to 1978 there was no provision to do that except in emergency situations. There was no automatic right to have information made available to the various participants in the adoption process. In 1978, we made, I suggest, an important legal breakthrough. However, at that time there was some debate and some disagreement as to the fact that we had not gone far enough; there were limitations built into that particular legislation.

The first limitation was that there would be a requirement of the adoptive parents' consent before an adopted adult and the birth parent could exchange information and, if they chose, agree to make contact and to meet. There was some dispute at that time as to whether adoptive parents should have that right of veto over their adult children—adult children, not minor children. Nevertheless, that was the breakthrough and we agreed to accept that.

There were limitations with respect to identifying information. There were limitations with respect to the disclosure registry and how it would operate. There were limitations with respect to nonidentifying information. The sense was that this was the first step, this was the breakthrough, and many of us were quite pleased to see it start. We all agreed that legislation such as this was never carved in stone. We had all been in this Legislature long enough to see legislation change, to progress and to become more open, to begin to meet more needs. The sense was that at some later date this legislation would come up again and we would have an opportunity to expand it somewhat further.

Unfortunately, when the legislation did come forward again, under the title of the Child and Family Services Act in 1984, the decision made at that time was not to expand the provisions but to contract them, to make them even more restrictive than they had been previously. I do not need to suggest that there was a great deal of consternation and dismay from many people, not only from legislators in this House but also from the public—adopted adults, birth parents, adoptive parents and various agencies such as Parent

Finders—who had indicated they expected a bit more of the government. As a result of that dismay and that reaction, my predecessor, the Honourable Bob Elgie, contracted with Dr. Ralph Garber of the University of Toronto to do a review of adoption disclosure practices throughout the world.

How did Ontario stand in comparison with other jurisdictions in Canada, the United States and Europe? Were the kinds of requests that were coming from the public and from other legislators in this House legitimate ones? What were the experiences in these other jurisdictions when they opened the door a bit further? Were some of the bad effects that were proposed taking place in those jurisdictions?

Members of this House will be aware that I presented a copy of Dr. Garber's report to the House, I believe in last March or April. All members know the general sense of the recommendations he made or the environment or atmosphere in which he made those recommendations.

Generally speaking, his sense was that in other jurisdictions the kinds of changes and advances we wanted to make had been done, some for only a few years, some for quite a number of years. There was very little, if any, evidence that the negative effects some of our members and the government of the day had envisioned actually took place.

On the basis of that and on the basis of our experience in 1978 with extensive public hearings—and I notice again in the House today, there are some members who sat in on those public hearings—in 1984 there were more and very extensive public hearings. As a matter of fact, I suggest that I cannot remember, in the approximately 12 years I have been in this House, any single issue that had received such widespread and extensive public hearings. The voices, opinions and recommendations from all sides of the question were placed on the table very forcefully.

I say that because what we are dealing with today is not a reflection of what I am proposing individually or what this government is proposing but rather of the voice of the population of the province that we are all serving, the voices of those people who are most directly affected by the decisions we are making here today. We have to keep that in mind. This is not a narrow point of view. This is a broad and expansive point of view.

That is not to suggest there are not still disagreements on whether this legislation goes

too far or not far enough. That is part of the purpose of this debate; that is part of the purpose of this assembly—to talk about those things.

I want to be sure my honourable colleagues remember and appreciate that there have been two sets of extensive public hearings on this issue. Much of what we are bringing forward today is a reflection of those public hearings.

I am suggesting that what we are bringing forward today is a consensus of those hearings. It is not by any means a unanimous point of view, because there are differences out there today, as there were in 1978, as there were in 1984, and as I suspect there will be tomorrow and in the weeks ahead, even when this legislation is in place.

What are we doing? Let me repeat once again that we are dealing with adults only and we are attempting to strike a balance between the adopted adult's right to know and the birth parents' and members of the birth family's right to privacy and confidentiality, if that is what they choose.

I am not suggesting we are coming down totally on one side or the other. I have to make that point, because it has been suggested from numerous quarters that this is one of those issues where you have to go all one way or all the other way; you cannot skirt around the middle. I am not suggesting we are skirting around the middle, but I am saying it is a very sensitive, personal issue with many people and those sensitivities and personalities must be respected.

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One of the goals and one of the purposes of this Legislature, this assembly, and any legislation is to recognize various points of view, often conflicting points of view, and to try to come up with something that strikes a fair, reasonable, just balance between those conflicting points of view. That is the intent in this legislation. It will be up to my colleagues from all sides of the House to indicate as part of their participation in the debate whether they feel we have done that. Those are the two key items we have tried to zero in on.

What is in the legislation itself? First, we are saying that nonidentifying information—by that we mean any information that does not identify the birth parents on one side or the adopted person on the other side—should be made available without consent; in other words, on request by any of the partners or players in the adoption process.

If on the one hand a birth parent wants some nonidentifying information about his child, that is available to him. If an adopted adult wants

nonidentifying information about his birth parents, that is available to him.

Let me step aside just for a minute. I keep using the words "birth parents." There has been a suggestion from some quarters that these should be referred to as the "real parents." I want to disabuse my colleagues of that term; I do not intend to use it. In every sense of the word, when I talk to adopted adults, they see their adoptive parents as their real parents, however we want to define that term.

There is no attempt here to make a distinction between the realness of adoptive parents and their relationship to their adopted children and birth parents and their relationship to the adopted children. That is a distinction I do not want to make, and I want to be sure my colleagues understand that. "Birth parent" means exactly what it says. "Adoptive parent" means exactly what it says. It is not the case of one being more real or less real than the other.

The first change we are making is to make nonidentifying information available on request. No consent is required. Second, we are making the adoption disclosure registry—which by the way has changed in name; that is its new name—semi-active on behalf of the adopted adult only. Basically, we are saying that the adopted adult applies to the registrar and says, "I would like a discreet, confidential search made for my birth parents and, if found, that they be asked to give their consent, or she be asked to give her consent, for identifying information and perhaps a contact or a meeting." That is what we mean by semi-active: semi because it is done only on behalf of the adopted adult, nobody else, in the process.

The reason we have gone that far is that we believe we have a special responsibility, a unique kind of responsibility, to the adopted adult. He or she is the one person in this whole process who had nothing to do with the original decision. Therefore, we are making that unique response to them.

Third—I touched on this briefly—we are removing the veto power of adoptive parents with respect to the availability of information, either identifying or nonidentifying, once the adopted person becomes an adult, not while he or she is still a child. While that adopted person is a minor, the adoptive parents and only the adoptive parents can have that information available to them, and it is solely at the discretion of the adoptive parents to share that information with their adopted child. That is the adoptive parents' choice; it is not our choice.

With respect to identifying information, the adopted adult can put his or her name on the adoption disclosure registry. The birth parent can put his or her name on the adoption disclosure registry. Birth siblings and birth grandparents can put their names on the adoption disclosure registry. When at any one time more than one of those are on, the registrar notifies them they are on and asks whether they want to have contact or whether they want their identities to be revealed. I suggest that in 99 times out of 100, the very fact that they have put their names on is a clear signal that is what they want to do. Nevertheless, as a last doublecheck, they are contacted and asked whether they want that information released or a contact made.

Consent is required in both cases. Let me emphasize that again. With respect to identifying information, regardless of the source and regardless of which pair of adults we are talking about, consent is required on both sides. In other words, a birth parent cannot get identifying information about her former child without that adult child's consent. The adult adoptee cannot get identifying information about his former parent without that parent's consent. The same thing applies to birth brothers and sisters and birth grandparents. Two-person consent is required for nonidentifying information in all cases.

With respect to the release of both identifying and nonidentifying information, counselling now is part of the process. With respect to nonidentifying information, counselling is made available. With respect to identifying information, counselling is mandatory.

The question has often been raised: "What do you mean by counselling? How long will it take?" It will be different in individual circumstances. Basically, it means that representatives of the registrar or the registrar himself or herself, who is responsible for the disclosure registry, will meet with the parties concerned and make sure they completely understand the nature of what they are doing and the information they are requesting. It is not to deny it to them, but to be sure they understand the implications of what they are doing, to be sure they are fully aware of what they are asking for. It is to assure us, who hold that information, that it will be given to someone who fully appreciates what he is asking for.

There is one exception: if the person doing the counselling has any sense whatsoever that the person about to receive the identifying information will use it for improper purposes, for example, to harm the other person. One can

sense different scenarios. A person might be very angry that a decision was made about him 20 years ago and want vengeance on the person who made that decision. If that comes out as part of the counselling process, the registrar has the right to deny the information. That is the only time he has the right to deny it, when there is some sense that the information would be used to harm another person physically.

To be sure that the whole process remains open, an appeal process is built in. The Child and Family Services Review Board, which is part of the child and family services legislation and which is there for other review and appeal purposes, could then be used to rehear the application. For example, if an adopted adult were denied access to information on the basis of a sense by the registrar or the counsellor, he could say, "They misunderstood what I said," or: "Here are the circumstances under which I said that. I have no such intention at all. I did not realize they were going to take it that way." If he can persuade the review board that he was misunderstood or misinterpreted, the review board has the power to overturn the original decision and that becomes the final decision. The process is built right in.

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For the purpose of this legislation, we are establishing the position of registrar. We want to be sure there is a competent, experienced person in charge of this whole process who will be responsible for the registry itself, for the counselling process, for making decisions about emergency situations in which information would be revealed without consent—and it has to be a true emergency, and as part of our guidelines and our regulations we will be sure this is clearly understood—and for arranging for actual access to the information itself, whether it is nonidentifying or identifying.

We are saying that times have changed. We are a less secretive society than we used to be; there is a greater sense of openness. There is an intention in this legislation to strike a balance between needs on both sides of the debate. We have come a considerable way from where we were. There has been very extensive public debate on this issue, with public input and public hearings, and we are trying to reflect those public hearings.

The question might arise, what if we do not do this? What are the alternatives? The alternative is that we are going to have 100,000 or more adult adoptees who do not have access to this kind of information, and for many of them—how many I

am not sure—that is an unnecessary and important void in their lives. We are going to have birth parents, birth brothers and sisters and birth grandparents who are genuinely and consciously interested in what has happened to their grandchild or their child or their brother or sister who will not have access to this information.

The other side of the coin is that the process is going to go on in spite of us. We know as legislators that when you do not provide a valid and legal vehicle for the distribution of information of this kind, there are other ways to get it. We know, for example, that an organization such as Parent Finders, which is completely outside the bounds of government—that is neither good nor bad; I am not making a judgement on that—over which we have no control whatsoever, has found more adult adoptees and more birth parents for one another in one year than this entire government process has found since 1978. In other words, there are structures out there that are going to operate anyway in spite of us.

Therefore, the question we have to ask is, is this a reasonable alternative to that loose, unstructured process that is out there, over which we have no control, no responsibility? Is this a reasonable alternative to leaving literally hundreds of thousands of citizens in our province in that quandary of ignorance and doubt?

I suggest it is, and I only ask my colleagues in terms of their participation in this debate to look at the balance we are trying to strike. I welcome their comments now.

Mr. Cousens: Can the minister elaborate on his thinking about public hearings that were held previously, in 1984 and in 1978, and on what the thinking is on why he should or should not have hearings now or further discussion on it, believing the bill before the House is indeed a consensus he wants to go ahead with? To what extent does it really represent a consensus? Is he in a position to accept any amendments to it and to show some willingness to negotiate certain parts of the bill? To what degree does he feel the consensus is already expressed in the bill we have before us?

The second question is, inasmuch as his bill brings forward the important role of the counselor in that whole exercise of working with the adult adoptee, the birth parents and all those involved, has he any thoughts at this early stage about what support the Ministry of Community and Social Services will give to children's aid societies to help fund the time for this extra counselling that goes on?

Those are just two questions. I will have a number of other comments to make, but I am interested in, first, his rationale for the consensus he has and his openness to some amendments and change, or just how hard and fast it is, and the public participation in this whole discussion; second, I am interested in the costing that goes into it.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I was a participant in the 1978 and 1984 public hearings. I can recall the very personal way in which the key issues were debated by a large number of people who appeared before our committees.

Second, I and members of my staff have personally reviewed all the major recommendations from those public hearings. They are reflected in this legislation or are deliberately not in the legislation. For example, one of the recommendations was that both the adult adoptee and the birth parent should have an active registry accessible to them. We chose not to go that route. Dr. Garber also made the same recommendation.

The point I am trying to make is that I do not see how we would get any new information with more public hearings. That is what I am really trying to suggest. Even after Dr. Garber's report was made public, further public input was requested. It was distributed to everyone who had participated previously. It was distributed to all of those whom we felt would be influenced by this decision. There was a very wide mailing. We got some input, but it was not very extensive, because people had to phone or write. But, generally speaking, there was very wide agreement with Dr. Garber's report with respect to this legislation.

With respect to the cost factor, I have already received support from the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) that additional funds will be made available in the 1987-88 budget for this purpose. We have clearly indicated to groups such as the children's aid societies that additional funds would be made available for the counselling part of this process.

Mr. Cousens: I wish the honourable Speaker a very happy new year. We are into the year already and back with much work to be done in the House. It is good to see him well rested after a good holiday and to see the Minister of Community and Social Services a bit rested. He is not as well tanned as some of his counterparts who must have gone south and spent their money in the United States. I think the minister stayed close to home and did some of the things we should do to keep the Canadian dollar in Canada.

We are dealing with a very important bill, and I respect the fact that the minister has expressed

such an interest in Bill 165, An Act to amend the Child and Family Services Act. It is certainly one that has raised a great deal of controversy for some considerable time. The process that has been followed over the past number of years has made everybody far more informed about the whole situation of the participants involved in the triangle of adoption.

In the whole realization that has taken place over the past number of years, there has been considerable movement in the thinking of people in Ontario that we could expand and change our thinking to accommodate the needs of those people who are involved within the triangle in a more sensitive and caring way. I am therefore very impressed with the process that was begun by Dr. Robert Elgie, who was referred to by the minister in his opening remarks. He decided to have an independent commissioner, who turned out to be Dr. Ralph Garber, make an independent review and study of the whole adoption process, and it was to provide recommendations for the Minister of Community and Social Services regarding the disclosure of adoption information.

As we all know, in 1978, the Ministry of Community and Social Services and the children's aid societies began to release nonidentifying information, under a section of the Child Welfare Act that deals with the sealing and nonsealing of court adoption records. The ministry discontinued that practice after Judge Killeen determined in the case of Elizabeth Ferguson that it was illegal and that it was inconsistent with the ministry's policy that adoption information is confidential.

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Dr. Elgie opened up the whole forum for discussion by having an independent commissioner undertake such a review and make recommendations. We are all grateful to him for that opening up of the process. It is not something that is done overnight. When some people look at the legislative process, they wonder why things cannot happen more quickly. I had calls before Christmas from people saying, "It would be a great Christmas gift if you could pass this bill before Christmas." There are times when as long as it is done correctly and the intentions of all those involved are at the highest level, it is possible for the government and legislators to proceed with dispatch but also with great care.

We are working from a base of information. In defining the path for Dr. Garber, I think Dr. Elgie did an excellent job to make it possible for a very wide-ranging, far-reaching study to be completed that will assist us in our process as legislators.

I have also been very pleased to have near me an advisory committee, which has included members of caucus and members of the community who have had a close personal contact with the full process involved in adoption in Ontario prior to 1978 and during the past several years, and who are very aware of what has been going on. I was not involved in the 1978 or 1984 hearings, so I have had to go back and do a considerable amount of studying to find out what was going on and why it was going on.

I will go back even further to the days when I wore my collar the other way around. I was a clergyman and had a circumstance in which an unwed mother came to me with the problem of what she should do and how the process could be done. I well remember back in 1964 working with her and her parents and discussing the various arrangements that could be made. Things have changed in the 23 or 24 years since then. We were able to discuss with her, and her desire was to have the baby. She went out of town to a home where she stayed. After having the baby, she was able to pass it over for adoption.

I remember the tremendous amount of emotion involved in that process of this young woman, who was very sensitive to her condition, to her womanhood and to the opportunity she had to take part in the greater process of society in being part of the life-giving process. It was a time for her when she had to make a major decision in agreeing to give up her child. She went through the decision-making process in such a way that one day she was saying, "I am going to keep the baby," and the next day she was saying, "I am going to give up the baby." Back and forth she waffled. I did not know until the very end exactly what would happen.

I do know when she made the decision to give up the baby for adoption, it was one of the harder decisions she had to make, but one of the reasons she was able to make it—and I remember it very well—had to do with the excellent way our children's aid societies were able to give her an understanding of what her role was within society and in relation to another family. Her baby would be taken into a family and would become part of that family. As a birth mother she was not taking something away, but contributing in a meaningful, wholesome and good way out of what had happened.

Although she felt bad and had a lot of tenderness, she was able then to accept that she had a role. She had fulfilled it. A chapter in her life was closed, and someone else's chapter was opening up, for another family was able to take in

another member. They were able to accept that baby as one of theirs, with their name and their environment and without further contact with that mother.

This situation of the birth mother has to be one of the most sensitive, generous and beautiful things that happen in a situation where this synthesis occurs. There is the pulling and tearing of the dichotomy that goes on in life, the catharsis that goes on, and out of that comes something beautiful. Within our society we have had an acceptance and an understanding of the birth parents' role in society, to allow other families to benefit from what they have to give and share.

We can never, ever lose the sensitivity to those birth parents, the father and mother of the child in the first place, whose love brought them together and allowed that child to be created by the will of God, and all those things of nature that made it happen; that continues to be an underlying trust of society which recognizes the contribution those birth parents had to make.

I have a terrible feeling. Now, 22 years later, would that single, unwed mother have gone to Henry Morgentaler instead? What can we do in our society to make sure that where there is a chance for life and a chance for some other family to be enriched through the addition of another child, that it be allowed to have that. Henry Morgentaler has a roaring business. Yet when I think of what could have happened when one looks at this first situation, that baby was then accepted and went on. Who knows where that baby is now?

I, as one legislator—and I think many and all of us—have to retain a high sensitivity for the needs of the birth mother, how that chapter is closed, how that life has now gone on and how she is doing what she is doing. Who knows what went on in 1964? Who was aware of the fact? Who all can be involved in it? Is it still her secret or is it going to be everybody's secret? Is it something she does not have to worry about or is it something she can start worrying about with changes in legislation?

Is the door opening so that young mother of then can now start thinking: "I wonder who else is going to know about it? How open is that register going to be? Who else is going to find out about it?" It is important that we continue to respect retroactively the commitments made by mothers and fathers who gave up their children for adoption.

Having said that, I am also sensitive to the needs of her baby and to the young people put out for adoption. They become part of families and

environments in which they grow up and of that new family. I think the minister said it well when he started talking about real parents. The whole thing becomes very academic, because parents who have adopted children and who have children of their own cannot differentiate the ones from the others. Perhaps there are certain things—"Hey, you can tell"—but they love them from their hearts and beings as much as they do their own; so there becomes a lack of differentiation that goes on within the family boundary.

The needs and understanding of a person are things our society has been involved with as we move through the 1980s. We understand an adopted person has certain needs himself. If his adoptive family has not shared certain things with him, the adopted person should be able to learn certain things and to build from that information, whether it be in the nonidentifying category, which this bill addresses, where the person can then draw upon health information and data that can be of assistance for medical reasons, whether for peace of mind or whether for having a better knowledge of who he is, what he is and what his background is. Anything we do has to be extremely sensitive to the need of that adopted child.

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The numbers are great. Among those who are adopted there is a worry—and some are very sensitive—that as we make changes to what is going on and as the information starts to get out, they do not want anything to happen to their adoptive parents and the relationship they have within the family in which they have been taking part. The long term has to be such that they continue to feel right about the relationship with the mother and father who have been with them and who have looked after them from a very young age.

We in society have to recognize that this is sometimes a very fragile relationship. The family is under attack from so many angles today in our society that we as legislators have to continue to find ways of strengthening the family unit. It is the most important unit in our society, and anything we do should allow it to be stronger and to face up to the challenges of what life is all about.

In sickness, in health or whatever it is that might face us, we in this House must not put that adoptive family under any different pressures or hurt it in any way, and I do not think we are. As long as we continue to have that sincere, empathetic, caring concern for those who are involved in this triangle and allow all participants

to be fulfilled and to have their needs and requirements somehow met, then we have done something worth while.

A number of concerns have come out of the legislation, the Garber report and this whole subject. I know there is a controversy brewing and that whenever this Legislature makes any kind of decision, not everyone is going to be happy with it. There is still a controversy around the confidentiality of adoptees' birth records.

In Canada and much of the United States, the closed record system is generally adhered to, but it is also significant to note the following, and I have this from Fergus Colin O'Donnell, who is cited in the Canadian Journal of Family Law, November 1985: "It is significant to note that all jurisdictions adhering to the open system only grant access to adult adoptees. Underage adoptees and others desiring access to birth records must do so through the courts." There is no reference in this bill to the courts, and that can be good if the appeal process works and if it is not going to cost a person a lot of money to have to involve lawyers and others for that process.

Mr. O'Donnell goes on to say: "Even in this open record system the information on the birth certificate is limited. This, coupled with the fact that the average time span between adoption and the search for the birth parents of 27 years, limits the number of successfully completed searches where contact between the adoptee and the birth parent is the goal.

"In both the closed and open systems, recourse to the courts is available. However, what becomes readily apparent from the study of the case law in Canada, Great Britain and the United States is that the vast majority of applicants are unsuccessful in their efforts to gain access to their birth records."

This is a concern we have. We are concerned to find a way of opening up this information in a way that is sensitive to the needs of all who are involved, to allow those who need to know and who want to know to gain that information. I have a number of amendments that I hope will narrow this so it is not something that will be open to too many people except for the principal players who are part of this whole process.

Another concern that comes through that I will touch on is the problem that we are dealing with only one part of the whole adoption situation as it exists in Ontario. We are not dealing with native children. That is something that will come forward at a later time. I do not mind that because there is an agenda there that is going to include many other parts to a solution as we face up to the

needs we as a society have for our native Canadians.

I believe we have to do everything we can to increase the support mechanisms for people to have adoptions. I do not know how one addresses it in this bill. I do not think we can fully address it except through the trust we build with those who are part of it. I would be happy if some of the people I talk to in my riding and in the community as a whole who are looking for the opportunity to adopt a child could do so. There is something that many heterosexual married couples want in having a child when they are not able to have their own child and would like to be able to adopt a child.

Dr. Garber pointed out that in Sweden, where there is a tremendous shortage of babies of Swedish descent to adopt, what is now happening is that people in Sweden are going to Africa. You can tell who has an adopted child because of the black, curly hair and black complexion. As the numbers have grown over the years, there is a circuit going between Sweden and parts of Africa. These children, who were adopted by Swedish homes, go back and forth to meet their birth parents. There is no question about who is the adopted person in Sweden at this point because of the difference in colour.

We see people doing things in our own country. Recently, over the Christmas holidays, I met a young couple who had just come back from Colombia after 15 or 17 weeks. They went to adopt a child and bring this baby from Colombia to Canada and this now is their baby. This is a beautiful family they now have because they have their baby. The baby is theirs, and I know will be loved, cared for and cherished as are the minister's children or those of everyone here in this House who tries to be a good parent. I want to make sure, if we can, that those who want to can have children. We in our society now are in a position where the lists are for five and seven years. The minister may be able to comment if he knows exactly how long some of the lists are for parents who are waiting.

In this past week, there were parents who have been waiting for five years and are still waiting. Because they moved from Metropolitan Toronto to Markham, they are no longer part of the children's aid society in Toronto and supposedly have to start all over again. That is quite sad because they thought they would be able to go back and forth between north and south of Steeles Avenue. The Berlin Wall seems to be high in some areas. Steeles Avenue between Metropolitan Toronto and York region also provides a

barrier rather than a bridge that would allow people to float back and forth and receive services that could be meaningful.

What we see in our society is a need for an environment in which adoption is encouraged, enabled and facilitated, where the rights of all are respected in a sensitive way and with balance so that the society we have can be strengthened through those family units where someone who wants to bring up a child not his or her own may be able to do so.

1610

As we look at the bill that has been presented to us, a number of things in it are very good. I worry that the bill does not try to define what identifying information is and what nonidentifying information is. It indicates that this information is going to be in the regulations. I would be very happy if the minister would share with us exactly what those definitions are. Failing that, I have amendments to put within the bill itself what identifying information is and what non-identifying information is.

The whole question of identifying and non-identifying becomes important, especially if one is living in certain communities where certain information will be identified. If you are living in a small community in northern Ontario, it would be far easier to take two or three factors, put them together and be able to say, "Oh, I know who that is."

In putting together what we want to describe as identifying and nonidentifying information, I would like the minister to be very clear so that I can be enlightened as to what it is those regulations are going to be saying. As he indicates in the explanatory note, "The framework for the disclosure of nonidentifying information is also provided and it will be in the regulations."

I am very anxious to see what that is and I hope there can be some discussion on that. That has a lot to do with the integrity of the system to protect those who still want to be protected and who, within the bill, have the right to be protected, especially from having identifying information released.

There are a few other aspects of the bill that concern me. Certainly, Parent Finders and other groups have done a worthy job to help those who want to know certain information. I appreciate that the minister has not shown judgement on their activity because it has met a need. Not in an unusual way, the Legislature is catching up to what is practice in society right now.

If information is released that should not be released, I believe those who are responsible and guardians of the data should have a responsibility to maintain secrecy when they should maintain secrecy. In order to do that, I would like to see some penalties associated with those who might otherwise be very free in giving out information. I think the temptation could be very great in some circumstances to make certain things available. I would like at least to make them aware of the cost of that temptation, which would take the form of a fine, which I have also cleared up in an amendment.

I am also concerned with the power of the registrar. I think the registrar and the whole method of maintaining the register have great merit; yet we all know if we give too much power to any one person how it can be abused. When we in this House are defining matters in this bill and giving powers that are very far-reaching to the registrar, I am inclined to try to curb that registrar's limit of freedom of opinion and freedom of action to be legislated and controlled by the House and by the Legislature rather than by his own conscience. It may well be that the registrar may not be as responsible as we may want that person to be. The place to start with responsibility is here in the Legislature and in the bill itself so that we have defined what we want.

I have a number of other concerns, and a number of these points will be coming out as we discuss it further in committee. It is important that amendments be made to this bill. We hope to be able to remove some of the opportunities for abuse that I believe are inherent in the bill already prepared. What we want is to have a balanced, rational position and one that is truly respectful of all those involved.

I look forward to discussing this in greater detail in committee. I do not want to say more, except that Dr. Ralph Garber in his presentation has done a great deal of work. The whole civil service of Ontario has continued to do a stalwart job in trying to deal with the whole adoption process for a long time.

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The member for Sudbury East (Mr. Martel) has been a little noisy over the past few minutes, and I would appreciate his not interrupting the member. Carry on, member for York Centre.

Mr. Cousens: I have great respect for the member for Sudbury East. Anyone who has been around for 20 years has really reached a point where he just cannot control it any longer, and he

is just showing that more and more by the day. Obviously, he will be going out to pasture soon.

I am going to leave my remarks for now, and I will get into some of the details of the issues I would like to cover while we are in committee and analysing it in greater detail.

Mr. Harris: I will comment very briefly and indicate support for my colleague the member for York Centre (Mr. Cousens) and indicate that I will support this legislation on second reading.

I support the consent provisions that the minister very eloquently outlined in his opening remarks. I also strongly support the counselling provisions he talked about. One of the areas I feel very strongly about, one of the areas that bothers me and I guess one of the biggest problems I have with the abortion clinic is that it bypasses any provision for counselling that may take place, among other concerns I have about the clinics.

I was very pleased with the remarks the minister made. I know I am supposed to be commenting on remarks of the member for York Centre, and I know he supported those remarks as well. It is a piece of legislation whose time not only has come but also is probably overdue. I know there will be some discussion in committee on some amendments and I look forward to participating in that as well, but in my brief two minutes I did want to indicate my support for this piece of legislation.

Mr. Cousens: The member for Nipissing (Mr. Harris) makes an excellent point on the counselling. In the question I asked the minister earlier, I hoped there would be an emphasis on funding to the children's aid societies for counselling. He has assured me he has asked for the money from the Treasurer, and I hope he gets it over a period. It is one thing to ask the Treasurer for something, and it is another to get it. I hope we are able to see the kind of funding that will allow the quality counselling that has been part of the children's aid societies in the past to continue.

I appreciate that the member for Nipissing is interested in this. It shows the number of people in our caucus and across the province, from all parties, who are most interested in this important issue.

It would be interesting to tie in what we are talking about here, a change in the law, with what has gone on in the past in certain clinics that are being run by Dr. Scott and Dr. Morgentaler. Our society has to continue to look after the very underpinnings of what society is all about.

I believe in having a society that is strong. I hope the move we are making here has the sensitivity we want to have. I am most interested

to see that we have that. On the other hand, there is a danger where we have abuses of the law and things happening that should not be happening. I would like to see us begin to find ways of having more children available for adoption. That is not even part of the bill, but it is something we as legislators should be looking at, to make things possible for people who want to have families.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: After the last few comments, I began to wonder whether I am dealing with a bill on adoption disclosure or whether this has to do with adoption in general or adoption versus abortion and other debates. I presume, because of the latitude you have shown, Mr. Speaker, you will be equally generous to me and allow me a full range to talk about equal pay and whatever else might cross my mind.

The Deputy Speaker: No, not at all. The only reason the abortion issue came up was that the member for Nipissing introduced that subject and the member for York Centre was responding to it. I will not permit discussion of pay equity or any such subject.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I am surprised. I suppose it was an oversight that the member for Nipissing was allowed to bring that into his debate. Never mind; I actually want to speak about adoption disclosure. You will be quite pleased about that, Mr. Speaker.

It strikes me from time to time in this House that historical moments arise that are unnoticed by a vast number of members, the press and other people who watch this place. There are others that are obvious; everybody pays attention to them and they get banner headlines.

This is one of those times. We are in a very important period in our history. We have a great opportunity here to show world leadership in how we deal with adoption and adoption disclosure. The minister talks about caution in the name of some sort of consensus. The definition of consensus is quite a bewildering one to me. Generally speaking, a consensus is an agreement, as I understand it. I do not recall the various sides that have come before this House in the past having agreement on any of these matters.

It strikes me that we are missing an opportunity to do something bold and important here in terms of the rights of adopted people, which have been suppressed for years by government action. We are failing to do that. A number of months ago, I spoke to the minister about this in his office and encouraged him to look closely at what Professor Garber had brought forward, to take

from it the exciting direction in which he was going and not to give in to the pressures that are out there because of the highly charged emotions involved around this issue, by its very nature.

Unfortunately, the minister has not done that and has come away with a compromise that he feels somehow meets the needs of people. I will argue that it does not meet the needs of many people at all. There is a slight opening for adopted children, but it is slight.

The question of paramountcy of rights is being ducked by the minister. To talk about this being equal and fair and taking into account people's rights is very misleading. I do not think the minister means to do that intentionally, but when we get involved in this issue, we start to think about somehow protecting different people's rights in the scenario of the adoptive parents, the birth parent or the child, trying to protect them all, and that we can somehow do that with equanimity. We cannot. It is profoundly untrue to say we can do that and that is the argument I will be making today.

I and my caucus will not be voting against this legislation. It is a move in the right direction and I will talk about that for a little bit. However, we are going to move, and I have passed to the minister a copy of it, an amendment that makes a profound change in the tone and direction of this legislation. I will try to convince the members who are here today and those who are watching carefully on their TVs in their offices and listening to this on private radios in the various committees around the Legislature, that the point of view I am expressing is one that should be taken up by this House. We must not let slip past us this opportunity to redress an enormous wrong to the civil rights of adopted people in this province.

I too would like to do a little bit of a historical review of where this issue has been and why we have not progressed farther today than we have. It is only appropriate that the member for Bellwoods (Mr. McClellan) should arrive because, as the minister will know, he was a major player in the debates in 1977 and 1978 on this issue when we tried to revamp the child welfare legislation in this province. I was not here at that time, but I did participate in the later hearings of the standing committee on social development to which the minister alluded.

In 1978, after protracted hearings, this Legislature, in trying to please everyone rather than understanding the fundamental problem in the abrogation rights of the adopted that has taken place and redressing that wrong, did what it

considered to be the best it could do. It came up with at least a registry where the names of people who had been adopted, their birth parents and adoptive parents, could be put and people could then go and seek that information. However, it placed vetoes on access by the adopted child, the birth parents and the adoptive parents.

This is very important to understand. In both cases, the argument was one that the right to confidentiality superseded the right to know of the adopted child. That is very important for us to recognize. That was the case both for the adoptive parents and the birth parents. Their right to protection, confidentiality and secrecy should be above that of the adopted child because either the birth parent or the adoptive parents could say, "No, you will not be able to get information from the registry." But it was a major step forward at least to have a registry. The member for Bellwoods was instrumental in getting that through a House that wanted to see no change and no boats rocked because members did not want the emotional turmoil in their offices by the various players in the adoption triangle.

At this point, I want to talk about the role of the state here because given where I am going to be going with my amendment, it is important to put this into context.

What we have at the moment in Ontario is a provincial law, involvement by the state in a decision to abrogate the rights of children—not just children but through their entire lives in terms of access to knowledge of their roots. Not only do we have the state involvement by the legislation, which limits that access, but we also have the state's involvement in the actual contracting of the adoption; that is, through the children's aid society, which works with the adoptive parents and the birth parent in choosing the proper home for the child. It plays an important role in gathering information and withholding information.

1630

The state is very involved at the moment in terms of the abrogation of rights and the protection and the judgement that the right of confidentiality should be greater than the right to know one's roots. I find it surprising in a society of immigrants, a society of people who came and formed a new land, where I hope we have an understanding in a multicultural society of the vast importance of roots, of the knowledge of where you come from and who you are, that we would choose and have chosen over the past number of decades to have the right to privacy of someone who is making a very difficult decision

and does not wish any further emotional turmoil in his life supersede the right of someone to know who he is and where he comes from.

This law is not changing that fundamentally. This law says the birth parent will still have that veto and the right to protection for the birth parent is still above that of the right to know for the child. Suddenly—and I would love to have this explained to me by the minister, because he did not explain it very well in his opening remarks—the right to protection from the hurt, the questioning and the security of the adoptive parent is dropped. Suddenly we are saying that right no longer has equal rights with the adopted child. The adopted child at the age of maturity now has rights that are greater than those of the adoptive parent, but does not have greater rights than the birth parent.

If there is not a double standard between birth parents' rights and adoptive parents' rights, I would like the minister to explain that to me. I think this legislation says very clearly that the right of a birth parent who made a decision, as the minister himself said, 18 years ago, 20 years ago or 40 years ago, still supersedes that of the child. Is it not strange in our society, where the right to know is becoming so important and where the notion of social responsibility in so many other fields—I think here of the environment and industry's involvement in the environment—that somehow we are allowing protection from potential emotional harm to a birth parent, who has certainly some social responsibility for the bringing into this world of the child, and for that child, therefore, to be able to enjoy the full civil rights that the rest of us enjoy, to understand who we are and where we come from, and that the social responsibility of that person can be pushed aside for the entire life of the adopted child and the adopted child may never know who he is?

What a strange value. Surely 18 years' protection is enough. In some cases, if this law were to come into place with the amendments I want, 40 years is long enough. At that point, it is important to face your decision, to understand the consequences, to deal face to face, by phone or by recognition of some sort or other with the existence of this child, who is now an adult. I know members do not have the time to do research on this, but I encourage them to read Dr. Garber's report and some of the research material that has been done on adoption and the importance of disclosure.

The minister will know—I am sure his staff will have told him—virtually every study that has been done indicates that adopted children have psy-

chological effects on them from not knowing their roots. The range of damage to the development of that child varies considerably, from very little to profound. Often during the teen-age years, when young people are having enough trouble coming to grips with just who they are, this lack of knowledge can provide terribly traumatic periods for them.

It also is understood that in the case of any investigation, any study of existing systems which have more open registries, more active approaches to assisting the adopted to find out about their roots, the myth that every adopted child follows this route does not hold. In fact, the difference between the number of adopted people who go and seek to know in the British system, for instance, and of those in our own, where we have a very restrictive registry, as I have already indicated, is marginal.

The other myth out there is that somehow there is great damage to the relationship with the adoptive parents. Perhaps that is what is behind the minister's change in policy; I am not sure. But all the studies now show that an approach by an adopted child to a registry, and even having a reunion with the birth parent, in the overwhelming number of cases is helpful to the relationship with the adoptive parents. There is a consolidation of that relationship, not a diminishing of it; there is a growth, not huge trauma.

On the other side—that is, the effect on the birth parent and on the child of even going the full route to reunion, if they choose to do that—studies show overwhelmingly that 85 per cent of the people who go to reunion, even in cases where there is not counselling about that involved, have a positive experience and 15 per cent do not have a positive experience. Where counselling is involved—and I am very pleased to see that element enhanced within this legislation—the number of people who have bad experiences is even smaller.

In 1983, we held hearings in the standing committee on social development on the new Child and Family Services Act. As it was being developed, some progressive notions were put forward in terms of how we might activate the registry and what we might do with nonidentifying and identifying information. There was no consensus out there from the groups coming to us. There were people with a range of views on this issue, from those of the member for York Centre (Mr. Cousens) to mine, and even more extreme than that; I am being facetious.

There was no consensus to choose from. The issues were clearly demarcated. Unfortunately,

we had a minister at the time who was emotionally involved personally in this issue and, as a result, we ended up with a proposal brought back to a Tory majority House which—as the present minister indicated, and I agree with him totally—made the existing legislation look progressive in terms of the controls placed on nonidentifying information. Unfortunately, I was in bed with a heart attack at that time. It was probably just as well that I was or I might have had one in the House. I had apoplexy seeing that kind of distortion of what was happening in the committee.

Personally speaking, I noticed the present minister's changes during those days in that committee. I looked at his participation in the debate of 1977-78 and saw that he was, if I may put it this way, along the conservative lines about changes that might take place. He was very nervous about upsetting the status quo at that time.

I have with me part of Hansard from our hearings in the social development committee in recent years. I noticed his changing and asking questions about possible ways we could make the registry more active, showing some caution, which made me not too surprised when he came out with the quote he did on this legislation, but also showing growth in that area. I think the committee as a whole was moving to change, to looking more progressively at how this registry could assist the adopted children to use it more effectively.

1640

Because of Mr. Drea's change and because of the hue and cry that was raised by children's aid societies and others about what this would mean, in effect, to their capacity to operate with respect to disclosing information about adoption, none of that was proclaimed. As has been indicated before, Dr. Elgie, the next minister involved, felt constrained to get Professor Garber to do his report.

That report, although there are incidental parts of it that I might disagree with, was a wonderful summary of the issue. I say to members and to anyone in the public that if they can get hold of this document, they should read pages 20 to 24, inclusive, on the arguments against disclosure and the myths out there about the problems of increasing the amount of disclosure that is available. I cannot, for the life of me, understand how the minister can read those and then come through with a half-measure, as he has done today, and couch it in the terms that he has somehow balanced rights.

He has balanced no rights. The veto is still there for the birth parent. He is saying that the birth parent's rights are supreme and that if the birth parent does not wish the child to know, even if that person is an adult, then that child will not know.

Let us deal with the sections Professor Garber deals with there. He deals with the issue that "adoptive parents would lose their children if adoptees learned of their origins and...sought reunion." He quotes the studies that show this is preposterous.

He deals with the issue that this is an irrevocable agreement with adoptive parents to maintain secrecy and refers to some court decisions that indicate that, in fact, it is not irrevocable.

Let us look at that. That decision, that secrecy was something that was passed by a Legislature. It was an act of a Legislature to deny the rights—very straightforward. Any number of times, a Legislature later on can sit down and say, "That was an error, and we must change the balance of those rights." I suggest to members that all they have to do is to remember what happened in this House before Christmas to understand that that is very possible. We have made substantial changes to the Human Rights Code in Ontario that would have not been countenanced five years ago, let alone 20 years ago.

These are things that can be changed, for which retroactivity does not need to be a major issue. I have heard this being raised and I ask myself: "If retroactivity is such an issue, why is it not an issue for adoptive parents? If retroactivity were unfair to birth parents who had gone into this agreement to have secrecy for ever, why is it not unfair to the adoptive parents, from whom we have now taken away that right to secrecy?"

The third point he discusses is that adoptive parents may continue to exercise full parental authority, even over the adult adoptee. The rights of an adult are the rights of an adult in this society. It seems strange to me—passing strange, as I have always said—that we should say the rights of adopted adults are less in terms of determinations about their lives, making choices about their lives, than they are for any of the rest of us who might have come from a family and not been adopted.

"Disclosure of facts about...birth and relinquishment would be painful and harmful to the adoptees." It is really vital that we deal with this question of the pain and trauma that can be involved in disclosure or nondisclosure realisti-

cally and not try to be paternalistic about it in making our choices.

If you are a child of a broken marriage, you experience pain around that, and there are various means of getting support to assist you with that pain. If you are bereaved, there are means of gaining support to deal with that pain. It is part of life. If you are a child who becomes a ward of the state because your parents beat you, whatever reasons are involved, you have to deal with that pain, and we put in supports to assist a person in dealing with that. If it is dealt with properly, it becomes a growth experience. Speaking as somebody who has gone through some of these matters, including grief for the death of my mother last summer, I say categorically that can be a growth experience; it can be important to a person's development.

We have determined to try to keep adopted children, their birth parents and their adoptive parents in a plastic bag of some sort, so none of them will be touched by the reality of the decision made 18 years ago or earlier. That is totally unrealistic in terms of the reality of our lives. It is the kind of experience we should all understand as a part of life. The problem with the system we have at the moment is that it is still shrouded in secrecy and shame and there is denial throughout the system.

If that is the case and if the only way we are going to reform the adoption system is to get rid of the secrecy and the shame and get people to understand that this is part of life and something they must come to grips with and deal with—like bereavement, like marriage breakdown, like a lot of the other problems that happen in our society—it cannot be done with a half measure such as the one the minister is coming forward with. It cannot be done by maintaining the secrecy of the birth parent as being more important than the right of the child to know, because that is denying what is wrong with the system; it is denying what is causing the pain and perpetuating the pain.

I urge the minister and other members who may not have dealt with this issue as intensely as some members in the House, including the minister, to think seriously about this opportunity we have before us now, this chance we have to redress an inequity, to say: "No, we will no longer allow the system to be secret, to be shameful, to be something that should be denied. We will open up and say something which is a matter of fact in our lives must be recognized."

Other societies have already dealt with this issue more progressively than we have. Since

1975 in Britain there has been an open registry. There are many studies of that registry, and I encourage members to look at them. They have all indicated, as was alluded to by one of the two previous speakers, that (1) there has not been an enormous increase in the number of people requesting information, and (2) any study done of the system has shown there has not been a major deterioration in the situation for any of the parties involved in the adoptive triangle. There is much evidence that even with the open system, it is still very hard, after many years, to find out where one's roots are, but at least in Britain the society is there and the government is there to assist rather than to set up another roadblock.

1650

One can enunciate any number of anecdotes around adoption. There is nobody in this room who will not be able to tell a poignant story of one kind or another. I want to draw on one from my riding that makes the point about the difference between our system here and that in Scotland at the moment.

I have in my riding a woman whom I have known for several years now who was very active in the United Church. In fact, she was so active that she was a chaplain at the Queen Street Mental Health Centre where she tried to assist people with their spiritual needs while they were in that mental health institution. She was a very together person and a charming and bright individual. She learned from a dying parent that she was adopted. It is a very traumatic way to learn that you are not who you thought you were.

Luckily for her in trying to deal with that, she learned that she had been adopted in England at the tail-end of the war. She made inquiries to the British registry in Scotland to see whether there was any record of her family. In fact there was. She then wrote to her birth father and discovered a little to her shock, given her religious convictions, that he was a Jew. She now had enormous turmoil to deal with in terms of her value system and her religious base, and she went to meet him, took counselling, went to psychiatrists and learned to deal with this.

She has not lost her relationship with what remains of her adopted family here in Canada. In fact, that has been enhanced. She has learned much more about who she is in reality. She treasures that enormously. If she had been born in Canada, she never would have found out that information. Just by the luck that she happened to have been born in Britain did she discover who she was.

She has written to me and talked to me on the street from time to time, asking me what is happening with this legislation and imploring me to speak as strongly as I can to convince the House that we need an open system, that it is the adult, mature thing to do and to do it now because goodness knows when we will get our next chance. Politicians do not jump into controversial issues easily; they veer as far away from them as they possibly can. Everybody wants a safe issue, one that can make him or her look good in the polls. This is an issue around which there will always be controversy. I suggest we will not get another shot at changing this for another number of years.

Let me talk a little bit about what I think are the good things in this act and tell members about the major amendment I am proposing. It is a good thing we got rid of the adoptive parents' veto. It was improperly based both for reasons of putting secrecy above the right to know and in terms of the need to protect. The relationship of the adoptive parent would be harmed in such a way that the parents and the adopted child would no longer be able to relate well. I am glad the minister has done that.

I do not understand and I am totally opposed to what he has not done around the rights of the birth parent. It is good that he has finally brought into the picture other birth siblings of the adopted child and that he has brought into play the birth grandparents. There is some recognition here that we are talking about family; we are not talking just about a parent. Often, as the minister will know, the majority of the birth parents involved in these matters are women—young women who early in their lives gave up children. This is an issue in which the extended family should have some rights. I think it is a very positive thing that he has recognized that in this legislation.

It is very good that he has recognized the need for counselling for all people involved, that there has to be a sensitivity about how we convey information and how we prepare people for dealing with the consequences of recognizing the right to know as the paramount principle involved here. I am pleased about that.

There are two things that this act does not do that it needs to do now and for which there is no need to wait. First, it should recognize that the adopted child's rights are paramount. That right to know, which has been withheld for 18 years while that person has been a child, must be reinstated by the state when that person reaches the age of majority.

I would argue—but I do not want to cloud the issue in this—that it would be very important for us to look at Dr. Garber's recommendation on younger kids, the importance of getting access to identifying information and the counselling of teenagers with the consent of the triangle. That could be very helpful in helping those kids deal with their teen years.

If the minister will not recognize that at the moment, he should at least recognize the fact that as adults we must all have equal rights and that every adult has the right to know about his or her roots. In a society of immigrants, that concept should be primal with us. One cannot pick and choose which adult should have that right and which should not. That runs against civil rights.

One argument is often raised by adopted kids who come before us through Parent Finders or whomever. The parallel they make is that it is like a comatose state. For 18 years, there is no right to know; the person is packaged away in secrecy. It is like the person who was in an accident and is in a coma. During the period the person is in a coma, other people have rights over him or her; but the moment he or she comes out of the coma, that person gets reinstated every right that an adult expects in our society.

The moment that person is able to make a decision for himself or herself, whether they are going to be painful decisions or easy decisions—surely it is the right to make painful decisions that is important; the easy ones are a snap, right? Being able to decide about the painful things, the things that make us grow or stunt our growth, is just vital.

As soon as one as a patient is able to talk and deal coherently again, one gets back those rights. If the government is going to shut off for children less than 18 years of age those rights that the rest of us expect, it is vital that we reinstate those rights to them as adults. I encourage the minister to recognize that, and at this stage in our history, to provide recognition now that it is vital to recognize the paramountcy of the rights of the adopted child.

When the minister portrays it as a balancing of rights, as he did when he started off, he is not presenting an accurate vision of this, because at the moment the rights of the birth parent are paramount. That veto they have means the minister is giving greater recognition to that than to the right of a child to know. He must recognize that and see that is inappropriate.

The other thing I would suggest is that this should be an active registry; that is, there should not be the possibility that somebody could be left

in the dark for ever because no one—his adopted parents and family—ever told him he was adopted. The right to know, even if it is going to be hard and disruptive to somebody who seems to be well balanced and in tune with himself, is something that must be recognized.

1700

I even have some difficulty with this concept with some of the members of my own caucus, as we did today in our discussions. Some of them may want to speak on this issue. However, in my view and in the view of the majority of the caucus of the New Democratic Party, it is important to make this an active registry that informs adopted people at the age of majority that they are adopted and that they have certain rights if they choose to exercise them. They have the right to find out who their birth parents and birth siblings are, and other identifying information, and they will be counselled and assisted on the best way to use this, or they have the right to decide not to follow that route but to leave it all alone and not to pursue knowledge of their roots any further.

If we as a state are participating in a secrecy decision by legislative fiat, if we are saying we are participants in the act of withholding information, we have to recognize it is important for the state to play an active role again in opening the access to that information should the person choose to use it at the age of 18.

It is not going to be easy for those few cases these days where the child has not been told throughout his growing years that he is adopted. It is going to be a very tough thing for that child to deal with. How we get the information to somebody like that is something that will require a great deal of sensitivity, as will the approaches to the other players involved.

I remind the minister that it has been the policy of most children's aid societies in this province since the late 1960s to give out a fair amount of nonidentifying information at the time of adoption and to advise and counsel adopting parents that they should make the child aware of his status at the earliest opportunity and help him deal with that and grow with it. There, the concept of knowledge being positive and that this is a growth thing the parents can work through with them has been accepted.

For the vast majority of people adopted from the late 1960s through to the present, their adoptive parents have been counselled to advise them that they are adopted. Although I do not have the statistics for it, I suggest the majority of those adoptive parents will have done that. Many people from an earlier age, people in their 30s

and 40s, may not have been advised of this and still may not know, but like my constituent, I profoundly believe they have the right to know, even if it is going to cause pain. We have the challenge to make that knowledge a growth experience for them rather than a negative experience.

I hope the minister and the Liberal government will see fit to look upon these rather dramatic changes to their legislation positively, and I hope the same might be true of the Conservative benches, although I do not have any great illusions that they are ready for this at this stage.

As someone who has had a brush with mortality and understands the fleeting nature of our existence here all too well, it seems to me that opportunities such as this, missed for a lack of creativity, a lack of imagination and a lack of political courage, are to be greatly regretted. I implore the minister as passionately as I can to make the amendments to this legislation that will make it as progressive as will be found anywhere in the world.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I am pleased at the candour of my two opposition colleagues in putting their own personal experiences and feelings on the line with this issue. I should not be surprised because it is one of those issues where we tend to feel fairly strongly one way or the other. Let me touch briefly on some of the points made by the member for York Centre and the member for Scarborough West (Mr. R. F. Johnston) in that order.

I want to recognize again, as the member for York Centre did, the contribution of Dr. Bob Elgie in getting the ball rolling on this issue. I guess we will never know for sure, but I have a fairly strong sense that had he stayed on as minister, he would probably have brought in a bill very similar to this one. I think I am reflecting that. I watched him operate for a number of years and I think I know where he is coming from. This is despite the fact, as the member for Scarborough West has already alluded, that there were members of the former government who had fairly strong feelings the other way.

I do not think there is any question about Dr. Ralph Garber's excellent contribution. I will not argue that with either the member for York Centre or the member for Scarborough West. Dr. Garber made a tremendous contribution to this debate, this legislation and the whole process. The fact that we did not agree with him 100 per cent is in no way a reflection of our downplaying the contribution he made.

The observation by the member for York Centre with respect to the difficulty of the decision made by the birth parent is one with which I can identify. He may know I have a number of daughters of my own who now are all adults. During their secondary school years, they had numerous friends whom I knew. In a few situations, their friends found themselves in the position of having to make this kind of decision. I am not unfamiliar with it on a very personal basis, as the member has described himself. I know how difficult it is. I give a tremendous amount of credit and support—I know my daughters were very supportive of their friends in making the decision they did.

It is a hard decision to continue with a pregnancy as opposed to having it aborted. It is a hard decision eventually to give up the child who is so much a part of you, in ways that I do not think we as men can ever truly appreciate. We can come close but I do not think we can ever fully appreciate it. I want to associate myself with the comments of the member for York Centre that we should do everything we possibly can to support a young mother in her decision along this line.

I also concur with him on the importance of supporting the relationship between an adopted child and the adoptive parents. That is also another difficult decision to make. Despite the fact that we know there are far more parents out there who want to adopt than there are children available for adoption, it is still a very critical decision for adoptive parents to make to take into their family, their home and their lives a child whose background they know very little about and to make a home for and be parents to him or her. While those adopted young people are still minor children, we have to be very supportive of the role of adoptive parents and the responsibilities they have accepted.

1710

The member for York Centre talked about the whole process of encouraging adoption. May I suggest to him that was very much in our minds when we drafted this legislation? We asked ourselves, in terms of adoption disclosure, how are potential adoptive parents going to see this? How are birth parents, faced with that decision we have just talked about, going to see this? How does that influence their decision?

We very much included that kind of thinking in the process of coming to these decisions. For example, we decided to say to adoptive parents: "We will not intrude in your lives or the lives of your children while they are minors, any more

than we have the right to intrude in the lives of birth parents and their birth children. We will not do that." At the same time, we are saying to birth parents: "Whatever your decision is, we respect that. We will not interfere with that decision, but part of the process of making that decision is that you continue to have the right"—and I will be speaking to my colleague the member for Scarborough West about this whole business of how we interpret the word "rights." If there is anything with which we as legislators come into contact on almost a daily basis, it is the concept of rights. I say to both of my colleagues that there are many of them, and we have to recognize many. We cannot recognize just one.

If part of the decision-making process of that young birth parent, and in many cases it is quite a young person, is that, "I can make a different kind of life for myself, I have a second chance to start over again, and it is going to be my decision at some time later on how much of my past I reveal," we have to respect that. If that is going to influence the decision on whether she puts her child up for adoption, keeps it herself or chooses to abort that child before it is born, we have to be cognizant of that.

Despite Dr. Garber's reports and all the evidence in other jurisdictions, I do not know how we can ever know for sure the impact of that kind of thinking on the decision-making, but we cannot ignore it. It would be very nice if we could, but I do not think we can.

The member for York Centre brought up the question of the difference between "identifying" and "nonidentifying," and he correctly quoted the note that the definition would be put into the regulations. All I can say at this point is that "nonidentifying" is to be as inclusive as possible. We are trying to put everything we can under it, with the one exception—not to include anything that would allow identification.

I am sure the member will realize, and he gave a specific example about smaller communities versus larger, there is always going to be a fine line there. How far can one go that is not too far? I am not sure whether we can make that distinction as finely as the member might like. I wish we could. My staff is working on that right now. We are going to do it as carefully as we can, but there is no way I can assure him that no nonidentifying information under any set of circumstances may turn out to be identifying. It may be; I cannot guarantee that.

The member referred to the fact we have not included reference to native people in this legislation. That is deliberate, because we are in

the process of consultation and negotiation with the native peoples, both those who live on reserves and those who live in urban communities, about how to deal with that issue. There is a tremendous amount of disagreement within the native community about how we should do this. I am not yet ready to be seen to impose our will on a process that is still on the way, that is still a consultative and negotiation process.

It is our hope that the next stage, which I have already discussed with the member in terms of several other amendments to this act, will include that as well. We are not prepared to move on that because the people whom it most impacts are not prepared to move on it. It was deliberately left out for that reason, and I appreciate that the member may very well be aware of it.

The member referred to the powers of the registrar. When we come to that section, I would appreciate his being a little more specific about which of the powers concern him. After he made that comment, I went back and I cannot see what the concern might be. That the registrar will maintain the register seems fairly obvious. That he will ensure counselling takes place we will not quarrel with. There seems to be general agreement that it should be done. He will ensure that nonidentifying material will be made available. He will have searches conducted if that is the request of the adopted adult.

The one area I have continuing concerns about, and perhaps that is what the member is referring to, is in making very sure that those searches are done in a confidential, discreet way. We are still having to decide what the guidelines and the regulations are going to be concerning who does the searches and how those people go about them. If that is what the member is referring to, it is a point on which I would like to continue the debate. If there are other specific issues, and I am not quite sure what concerns the member, we will find those out.

The member indicated that he continued to be concerned about funding for the counselling process and made reference to the fact that I had indicated to the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) that funds would be required. I want to go one step further. The member will be well aware of the process that when any minister makes a submission such as this to cabinet, he has to put in the expected expenditures associated with the new legislation. In that way, the funding proposal has been included. We have indicated the various ways in which we believe new expenditures will be required to make this legislation active and

effective. It is in that sense that the dollars have been requested.

I shall now move on to the comments of my colleague the member for Scarborough West. There is a fundamental philosophical and ideological difference between us. I do not think there is any way we can skirt that. We are going to continue to debate that; I appreciate that.

The various things that he believes have been left out of this legislation have been discussed. It is not as though they were dismissed and not discussed at all. They were discussed in a number of ways. I discussed them with Dr. Garber. He explained why he had made his proposals and we talked about them. They have been discussed with a number of people who are or will be impacted by this legislation: children's aid societies, some members of Parent Finders Inc., some adopted adults and some birth parents. There has been a fair bit of discussion, and there continues to be disagreement. There are people on both sides.

What it really boils down to is my sense, the sense of my colleagues and the sense of the reaction I have received that we have to recognize the balance of rights.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Explain "balance" when there is a veto.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: On the one hand, there are the rights of the adopted person to know and, on the other hand, there are the rights of the birth parents to maintain their confidentiality and privacy. The honourable member has said very clearly that he does not see that as a balance. He sees it as a distortion. He sees that all the rights should be on the one side. I do not agree with him and I cannot support that contention. The right to know in almost any situation is not totally unlimited. I will not go into any great discourse on that, but I suggest that in almost anything we do, for a number of reasons, whether we agree with them or not, there are limitations on our right to know. There is a limitation on our right to do certain things.

Let us talk about our right to know. Frankly, I say to the member for Scarborough West that the right to know of the adopted person is not unlimited; there comes a time when his right to know intrudes on the life and the rights of another person. That is the fundamental point we have to keep in mind.

1720

The member talks about the state denying certain things. It can be viewed from the other perspective. By what right does the state, the

government—however he wants to describe it—intrude into the life of another person? I do not think we have the right to do that. I do not think we have the right to interfere in the life of a birth parent who has made an entirely new life for herself.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: You have already done it.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: No, we have not. We are saying that birth parent has the right to choose to make a life for herself. The member should remember we are not talking about just one person. It is not a case of saying we will automatically allow the now-adult adoptee to know who that birth parent is, because in most cases that birth parent now has a new husband and children, a whole family of her own. She has established relationships in her community and in many other ways. If she has decided, for whatever reasons, not to reveal that past experience, that past decision, that is her business.

If we want to talk about rights, there are many kinds of rights. I do not think the state has a right, without her approval, without her consent, automatically to intrude into her new life, the life of her husband, the life of her children, the life she has made for herself. I do not think we have the right to do that.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: You made the same argument for adoptive parents.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: No. There is a fundamental difference. The adoptive parents know what the situation is. The adoptive parents may choose not to give that information to the now-adult adoptee, but the fact remains we are not impacting on the adoptive parent. That parent already knows what the situation is. They know who the birth parent is in many cases, they know that the child has been adopted and they know their relationship to that child. It is fundamentally different, dramatically different. I realize the member is trying to make a parallel, but that parallel, in my judgement, does not exist. I simply cannot agree.

I am getting a mixed message from the member. On the one hand, he is suggesting that this legislation is doing almost nothing and, on the other hand, he is recognizing that we are making some changes. I think we are making a big change and, if anything, this legislation is a classic example that it is not the end of it.

In my experience in this House, this is the third time since 1978—nine years—in which this legislation has come back for revision. I do not know when or under what set of circumstances, but it is just as unreasonable to say that it will not

be back for a long time. I think it is just as likely it may be back in two or three more years under a different set of circumstances. What will happen at that time, I do not know, but I disagree once again with the member when he says this is the time when we have to do everything. I do not agree.

I think we have moved a long way. We have, for example, completely opened up the whole process of disclosure of nonidentifying information. That is significant. It was one of the issues the member, I and several others in this Legislature fought with difficulty back in 1983 and 1984 when we were debating this. We have moved a long way to do that. We have moved a long way, as the member has recognized, by including siblings and grandparents, recognizing the whole family.

That is significant. That information was not available at all before. It now will be available. We have moved a long way in eliminating the adoptive veto. We could go on and on. I think the member plays with the issue when he suggests that what we are doing is rather minor, that we have not done a lot and that we have not moved a long way; we have.

There is one fundamental issue that we have not agreed to, and one only. There are a few others where the member wants to make some changes, and I will touch on them, but when it comes right down to it, the fundamental one is the right of consent of the birth parents. Let me take this one step further. This is not a right given just to the birth parents; it is given to everybody in the process. The member surely recognizes that it is equally a right of the adopted person. If the adopted persons do not want their whereabouts or identification revealed, they have the right to refuse too.

The member will remember that strong arguments were made in 1984, and I can remember that strong arguments were made in 1978, just as he argued today, that nothing should interfere with the right of the adopted adult to know. The argument was also made that nothing should interfere with the right of the birth parents to know. We have not accepted that argument either. We have said that in all these situations, a mechanism, a process, a procedure has been put into place where adopted adults, birth parents, birth grandparents, birth brothers and sisters can find out about each other, but in every one of these cases, regardless of in which direction the traffic goes, there has to be two-party consent.

It is not just for the birth parents; it is also for the adopted person, it is also for siblings, it is also

for grandparents. In all these cases, we recognize that factor. I do not think one can ignore that.

I realize that the other issue the member is concerned about is the degree of activity of the registry and the fact that we should as a government, as a state, however the member wants to put it, tell adopted people that they are adopted.

That is intrusion of a sort that I do not think we have the right to make. I do not think we have the right to intrude in people's lives in that way. It has been my experience and I suspect it has been the experience of the member that, because of the counselling and because of the encouragement that children's aid societies and other adoption agencies have put into practice over the past couple of decades, by far and away the majority of adopted persons are told. As a matter of fact, they are told quite young, in many cases at the age of three or four and in most cases before they are 10 or 11.

However, I think there is a limit to the right of the state or the government to intrude in people's lives in this way. I do not think we have any business telling people things such as that.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: It is your secret.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: No, it is not our right to do it.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: It is your secret.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: It is not our secret at all; it is the right of the adoptive parents to make that information available. That is part of their role as parents. The long and short of it, as I indicated before, is that there is quite a fundamental ideological and philosophical difference between the member and myself. I tell him right now that I cannot support amendments that would lead to that kind of result. I am quite prepared to debate them and we will see what support he gets from the House, but I clearly indicate to him that I cannot support them.

Motion agreed to.

Bill ordered for committee of the whole House.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: If there is no objection, Mr. Speaker, I think we should go into committee of the whole House right now. I am prepared to start. I do not think we will finish it. Is it all right with my two colleagues? I understand I have the privilege of inviting a couple of my staff people to be present.

Mr. Speaker: You can arrange that when the Chairman takes the chair.

House in committee of the whole.

ADOPTION DISCLOSURE STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT

Consideration of Bill 165, An Act to amend the Child and Family Services Act, 1984 and certain other Acts in relation to Adoption Disclosure.

Mr. Chairman: Do any members have comments, questions or amendments? If so, on what section?

Mr. Cousens: I have tabled a series of nine amendments starting at section 7. Even before we get to that, I would like to have some discussion with the minister on the explanatory notes, on the whole business of nonidentifying information, if he is able to share that with us.

Mr. Chairman: I believe the explanatory notes are not part of the bill. Perhaps they can be dealt with when you deal with various sections. Are there any sections you wish to deal with before section 7 vis-à-vis the explanatory notes?

Mr. Cousens: I think it is important before we go too far into it to get the minister to comment on the whole definition of identifying and nonidentifying information overall. Then we can get into other specific parts of it because it overlaps a number of sections, unless we just deal with the amendments I have.

Mr. Chairman: I see, for example, section 3 of the bill refers to nonidentifying information. Perhaps you can bring up the definition then. Is that fair enough?

Mr. Cousens: I will put my amendments forward.

Mr. Chairman: For the sake of the record, they all appear to have to do with section 7, except for one which has to do with subsection 11(1) and one on section 8a. That is section 8a, subsection 11(1) and a group in section 7.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I do not have any amendments until we get to section 7 either. I have just given some of them to the Clerk. I thought I had extra copies of two for you, Mr. Chairman, but I do not seem to have them. I will have them run off while we deal with the Conservative amendments, which come at the same time.

Mr. Chairman: Yes, you have two amendments to section 7. One is in regard to section 158c and the other deals with subsections 158e(3) and (4).

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I have two others which I do not have copies of at the moment, unfortunately.

Mr. Chairman: But they are also to section 7?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Yes, they deal with subsection 156(2) and subsection 158a(3). They are all in section 7.

Mr. Chairman: Are there any other members who wish to refer to questions, comments or amendments to sections? If so, to what sections?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I wonder if I might make a request. I do not know if this is appropriate for the Conservative critic, but what I would prefer to do, rather than moving my two amendments which have been sent out to be copied, is to move the substantive motion I am putting in and have that debated. I realize I do not have the minister's support and I doubt we will have the House's support for that.

Rather than dealing with all my subparts before we get to the substantive matter, I would like to deal with that after the Conservative member has had a chance to place his amendments. Is that appropriate? Some come just before that.

I mentioned that my amendments are all to section 7, but the first one you have before you is subsection 158c(1). That is the substantive amendment. The others I have put out are required to tidy up the legislation if that passes. It has been indicated that they are not likely to pass. I would prefer to move the substantive one, and then I will not have to move the others. I will call that to your attention perhaps when we get there, and we can move back, leave a section open if necessary and close it off afterwards. How is that?

Mr. Chairman: The member for York Centre (Mr. Cousens) also has several to section 158c. I would like to carry what we can carry, if there are no other members who wish to refer to any sections.

Sections 1 and 2 agreed to.

On section 3:

Mr. Chairman: Does the member wish to discuss that with the minister or get his reaction with regard to definitions?

Mr. Cousens: This might be a good opportunity for the minister, if he has them with him. Prior to now, we have not had an opportunity to hear a full-point review, but regulations are going to contain the definitions. Can they be tabled or shared with us, so we will know exactly what is going to be contained in the regulations?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I am not able to table the regulations; they are not complete. There are ongoing consultations at present with the parties who would be impacted by this legislation—for

example, children's aid societies across the province—in the drafting of the regulations.

I cannot add much more than what I did earlier. The intent of the distinction between “nonidentifying” and “identifying” is to make the nonidentifying as broad as possible without identifying the birth parent, or the other way around. If it is the birth parent seeking the information, the intent is to give him all the information we have except that which would identify the adoptive person.

It is in the nature of the registrar that he is going to take a look at the regulations we finally come up with and say whether that does or does not do it in that set of circumstances, because as the member himself has already indicated, depending upon communities and other situations, it might make a significant difference in one case or another.

I have no problem with the definition the member has put out. It is basically the same definition I think I have just given. I simply remind the member, however, that it would still require more detail in regulation. This does not change anything significantly, but I have no problem with it. If the member feels strongly that he wants these two words defined as he has defined them, I will not object to it. I draw to his attention that we are still going to have to have regulations with more specificity, and we are still going to have to have judgement calls by the registrar and those who are appointed by the registrar to make these decisions. I do not think we can avoid that in statute law, because the circumstances are going to be very individual.

Mr. Cousens: The process the minister is following is the one I hoped he would. It demonstrates the kind of co-operation that has to exist for this act to work effectively, so there is a sincere and honest dialogue between the ministry, the drafters of the legislation, and the children's aid societies as they begin enforcing it through the registrar.

I can understand that process is not going to be completed in the time when we are dealing with this legislation in the House. We are talking about an awful lot that has happened very quickly by virtue of first reading on December 1 and second reading today, and the regulations will take further time to develop.

I hope that along the way, in the spirit of the way the minister just responded to this situation, there might be an opportunity for members of the third party and ourselves to have a chance to review those regulations and to get a feel for the way the intent is being followed through. Not

that there is any danger of something not being followed through, but it is so important, at least to satisfy the curious mind I have, that we be extremely careful in what we do call identifying and nonidentifying as to how those regulations are drafted. If that is the case, I will be pleased to proceed with the amendment I have here, which is to section 158b, and put that on the floor at the appropriate time.

1740

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: Just to ask one question, there is one little phrase, "is likely in." The question that raises is, who is to decide that? Does the member have a particular person or office in mind? I am not sure I fully appreciate or fully understand what the member has in his own mind when he makes that statement.

Mr. Cousens: This is why I back off and adhere to the kind of thinking the minister said, that no bill can ever be so complete that you can have all the logic perfectly founded. Thus, from that point, the regulations would be interpreted by the registrar or by the appeal board, I would think. They are going to take a sense of what it means.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman: Just to assist in moving things along, since the amendments around the definition are already under the motion by the member for York Centre to come under section 158b, why do we not move through step by step instead of dealing with section 158b now? There is no place to amend where we are now stopped at section 3, even though the question is relevant because the phrase is used. Why do we not leave the debate on the actual motion until we get to section 158b? For my purposes, we have no problem with its being entered, but I think it is superfluous. I would just as soon see it in regulations.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you. We have that opportunity, or you could stand down section 3. However, in order to carry on in an orderly manner, we have to deal with section 6 before section 7. What is the committee's wish?

Interjection.

Mr. Chairman: Fine. The member for York Centre is saying we will carry section 3 and on through, and we will deal with this matter under section 7? Thank you.

Section 3 agreed to.

Sections 4 to 6, inclusive, agreed to.

On section 7:

Mr. Chairman: Now we are up to section 7. I would like to ensure that we carry the first portion of section 7 first.

Member for York Centre, you have an amendment to section 158b of the act as set out in section 7 of the bill.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: As I see section 7 at the moment, we will deal with sections 155 and 156 first and then move on to section 157.

Mr. Chairman: I am having a difficult time hearing you, especially when your head is down.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Are we going to deal with sections 155 and 156 before we move to sections 157 and 158? I will have a point of order to stand down my motion on subsection 156(2), which comes before section 158, until we deal with section 158.

Mr. Cousens: The member for Scarborough West is correct that his first amendment to subsection 156(2) should go before mine.

Mr. Chairman: Does the member for Scarborough West wish to stand this down until after the member for York Centre's varied amendments?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I propose—

Mr. Chairman: I understood you to say your main motion to section 158c was the springboard for all these others.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I wanted to make sure we were leaving subsection 156(2) open for us to come back to. I would like to have it stood down. I have no amendment to section 155, and neither does the member for York Centre. Therefore, we might just agree to that now before we go through.

Mr. Chairman: Can section 155 be carried by itself at this point without encountering any problems later?

An hon. member: Yes.

Mr. Chairman: It can. Frankly, I am not finding the bill the easiest to read.

Under section 7 of the bill, shall that portion designated as section 155 stand as part of the bill?

Agreed to.

Mr. Chairman: Is it agreed to by the committee that we are standing down section 156?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: If you want to do subsection 156(2), that is fine.

Mr. Chairman: I would rather stand down the whole thing in case subsection 2 loops back on another section.

Agreed to.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: We could agree to section 157, and then I have section 158, which I

would also like stood down. Why do we not deal with section 157?

Mr. Chairman: The member for Scarborough West is suggesting that we carry the portion designated as section 157. Is there any discussion on that? There being none, shall that portion designated as section 157 of the act stand as part of the bill?

Agreed to.

Mr. Cousens: I have one question on that section. For clarification, in subsection 157(4) about persons adopted outside Ontario, in the case of a couple who bring in a child from another country, not unlike the Swedish example I had—I think we could be facing far more adoptions from outside the country by virtue of the decreased number of children available for adoption in Ontario—to what extent are we giving or will we be giving counselling services to parents who will be adopting from outside the province, either from Canada or another country?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: The basic rule is that if the adoption procedure takes place here in Ontario, we have all the records and therefore we have the ability to disclose. If that process takes place somewhere else, in some other jurisdiction, then we do not have the records and therefore it is not possible for us to disclose.

We have indicated in our legislation that if the process takes place here but the person then moves to another jurisdiction and seeks information from that other jurisdiction, we will give that information to the child welfare agency, however it is defined in that other jurisdiction, and it will then pass it on. In other words, we will not interfere with the laws of another jurisdiction. In either case, it depends on where the actual procedure itself takes place. It is only when it takes place in Ontario that we have the information and therefore we are able to disclose it.

As I understand it—I will ask my staff people to correct me if I am wrong—if a couple from Ontario goes to Colombia or Venezuela or some place such as that and arranges an adoption procedure there, that is beyond our jurisdiction. If they bring back that child, I do not think we have any control over the information that is available. Am I right or wrong? I will have a small conference.

1750

My staff points out to me that in some cases children are placed in other jurisdictions by the Ontario authorities. That again is a situation where we have the adoption information, but in that case the other jurisdiction does the adoption

placement part of it. We would work with that other jurisdiction, from one agency to another agency. There are several different possibilities.

Mr. Cousens: I guess it comes in the sharing of information among provinces at this point. If we deal with just the Canadian example, to what extent is there co-operation among the provinces for adoption from one province to another and for the sharing of information that goes on, which all ties into the broader subject?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: The problem is the legislation varies from province to province. The legislation we have before us is very similar to what is currently in place in Saskatchewan, but it is not the same as that in other provinces. Therefore, the difficulty we have is that if we place a child for adoption in another province, we must respect the legislation of that province. We have no right to interfere with their legislation, just as we say they have no right to interfere with ours.

There is no process at present to exchange all this information, because the legislation is so different. There are some provinces where there is practically no disclosure at all. Other provinces have gone further than we have. I mentioned Saskatchewan, where the legislation is very similar. As a matter of fact, ours is to some extent modelled on theirs.

Mr. Cousens: I think it is an important subject to the extent that it may well be an item the minister can put on the agenda for the Premier (Mr. Peterson), who is responsible for intergovernmental affairs. I am not sure what problems exist among the provinces in this country, but it can be an area in which we do have more open channels of communication. I have a sense they are not as open as they could be, by virtue of the differences in legislation of the provinces.

I am also concerned that there be that kind of environment or a context that we as Ontarians want to establish for people who will be adopting, so there is a sense that if people do go outside our boundaries, and the legal recourses are available to them to adopt outside, that we also have within our province certain services that can assist those people in being good parents.

There may be a common problem that develops with people who adopt from other countries or other provinces. There may be other services that can be provided by the agencies of the government so they can receive that assistance. Perhaps this becomes another one of those checkoffs that we monitor and watch to see whether there are ways in which we can improve

that service, inasmuch as I have a feeling that we will be going far more outside the province for children than we have in the past because of the shortage we have here now.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: Let me make two observations. There are some parallels for co-operation among provinces even when their legislation is not similar. There is the whole question of child custody, for example, and the enforcement of payment provisions on a spouse. There is an agreement among the provinces to co-operate with one another in those two areas. Otherwise, what we saw happening just a few short years ago is that a parent would simply jump over the border and no longer be subject to the legislation of the preceding province. The provinces all recognize they would have a problem there.

It may very well be that with respect to adoption legislation, and disclosure legislation in particular, there can be a greater degree of co-ordination than there is at present, but as I have indicated we still have to respect the statutes of another jurisdiction.

With respect to going outside the province to adopt, one of the issues that has been brought to our attention is that many jurisdictions that were quite free and open about allowing their children to be adopted by parents from Canada—I think the general nomenclature is North Americans—are becoming much more restrictive. For example, some African countries have put a total stop on their children being adopted out of the country.

I am not sure what the future of that question is, but I point out to the members that if parents from Ontario were to go to another jurisdiction to adopt a child, it is the legislation of that jurisdiction that determines the nature of the adoption. When they come back to Ontario, then as far as we are concerned, they are the legal parents of that child. Naturally, through our various child welfare and child protection services we will provide them with all the support we possibly can, but we cannot tell them they cannot do it. We cannot tell another jurisdiction that it can or cannot give the child to those parents.

If that other jurisdiction were to get in touch with us and say, “Mr. and Mrs. Jones want to adopt one of our children; do you think they would be good parents?” we could say, “We will share whatever information we have with you, but you still have to make the decision about whether you are going to allow them to adopt.” I definitely agree with the notion of co-operation and co-ordination among provinces. That is something we should continue to work on,

despite the fact that we have different legislation.

Adoptions in other jurisdictions, such as Africa, South America and places such as that, are obviously going to continue. We will provide whatever support we can, but it is really beyond our jurisdiction to tell either the parents or the other government what they can or cannot do. I also suspect we may be facing the situation where it may not be quite so easy to adopt outside Canada or North America. These other countries are beginning to appreciate that their children are part of their being as well and they are not going to let the children flow out as easily as they have in the past. Only time will tell. I cannot prophesy that.

Mr. Cousens: I appreciate the answers the minister has given. I would not ask the government of Ontario to do anything outside of what we should be doing or can do under the existing laws.

I have one final question. Is any service provided by existing Ontario government agencies or children’s aid societies that would give advice, counsel or direction to prospective parents who want to adopt children outside the boundaries of Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: According to my staff, that is an ongoing process at present. As a matter of fact, we encourage prospective parents to consult with us or the agencies we support to be sure they fully understand the nature of the country they are going into and the kinds of conditions that will apply, the decisions to be made and the situations they may find themselves in when they bring back such a child. That service is available right now.

I am also told there is a federal adoption desk that supplies information and support to such parents. There is already a counselling service in the province for them. I think this is what the member is directing his attention to. We cannot enforce it, but it is available.

Mr. Cousens: Does the minister have the number of the federal counselling desk? It is something that should be more public. I was not aware of that.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I will get the number for the honourable member.

Mr. Chairman: Actually, we did carry section 157, but just for the sake of the record, shall that portion of this bill designated as section 157 stand as part of the bill?

Agreed to.

Mr. Chairman: For the sake of simplicity the next time we are back here, I believe there are no

amendments to that section designated as section 158. Shall that portion designated as section 158 stand as part of the bill?

Agreed to.

Mr. Chairman: I understand the member for Scarborough West (Mr. R. F. Johnston) wishes to stand down that portion designated as section 158a until a later time. Is that correct?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Can I just stand down the portion I have mentioned, or does it have to be the whole section? It is whichever you find best.

Mr. Chairman: No, you had better stand down the whole one, section 158a, until your main motion.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Okay.

Mr. Chairman: Is it the agreement of the committee that we stand down section 158a?

Agreed to.

Mr. Chairman: It is stood down. I am keeping my eye on the clock. This will bring us to section 158b, which we will start on next time. The member for York Centre has an amendment to it.

Mr. Cousens: Is that stood down?

Mr. Chairman: Section 158a is stood down and we will start with section 158b next time.

On motion by Hon. Mr. Sweeney, the committee of the whole House reported progress.

The House adjourned at 6:02 p.m.

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Committee of the whole House

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Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 33rd Parliament
Wednesday, January 14, 1987

Speaker: Honourable H. A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday, January 14, 1986

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

NORTHERN HEALTH SERVICES

Mr. Gordon: I say to the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston) that many people are facing an uphill battle when it comes to equality of medical care in comparison to what the people in southern Ontario are receiving at present. It appears we are losing the struggle. In the Sudbury region, there is one doctor for every 840 residents. In comparison, in Frontenac county in southern Ontario, there is one doctor for every 240 residents. This is an injustice.

It is obvious that the minister is not able to manage this health care system in an effective way so all residents receive equal health care treatment. What is really bad is that he is even denying foreign doctors who have immigrated to this country and who are willing to practise in the north the opportunity for the internships that would make those doctors available for Sudbury residents.

A recent study shows that there is a requirement in the Sudbury region for 41 specialists and 52 general practitioners. Surely the Minister of Health should recognize by now that, as the minister, he should be giving equality of medical care to every resident in this province. I implore him to recognize the very serious situation we have in Sudbury, the situation my people have, and to begin giving people in Sudbury the kind of health care they need and require.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Mr. Wildman: If the Ministry of the Environment is going to designate the proposed Magpie River project of Great Lakes Power Ltd. for environmental assessment, the process should be streamlined to ensure that the hearing can be held as early as possible this spring. If the project is then approved, tenders could be called and construction begin this year. If the minister had made this decision last fall after he received the report of the Environmental Assessment Advisory Committee at the end of September, then the process could be well on its way to completion.

If the minister is about to proceed in this manner now, I hope all the ministries of the government work to ensure that the hearing process can be expedited, all the views can be heard and a decision can be made as soon as possible so the uncertainty that has developed in the Wawa area can be put to an end as soon as possible.

ONTARIO TRADE REVIEW

Mr. Brandt: After an exhaustive and in-depth study of Ontario's trade position, the select committee on economic affairs made a number of informed and well-reasoned recommendations. Chief among those recommendations was that the Ontario government should establish an Ontario House in Washington, DC, as a means by which to enhance trade between the two jurisdictions and to communicate our trade concerns to the United States.

The government's failure to act on these recommendations in any way is indicative of its shortsightedness and its inability to understand the importance of the US market to Ontario and trade matters in particular. This is the government which, in the first response to Ontario-US trade, closed two of the offices in the US and, by doing so, blinded two of the eyes that could have warned us of the jurisdictional problems in the US with respect to protectionism.

It is not enough for this government to plan a response to the 15 per cent tariff on softwood lumber after the US has taken action on it. It is not enough for the Premier (Mr. Peterson) to speak to the US ambassador about Ontario's concerns after we find out that the auto pact may be on the free trade negotiating table.

I recommend to the Premier that we take immediate action at the earliest opportunity to establish a trade office in Washington to start looking after Ontario's very real concerns.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr. Mackenzie: The need for an adequate, regional, occupational health and safety centre in an industrial area such as Hamilton is obvious any way one wants to measure it. In spite of the McKenzie-Laskin whitewash, even that report outlined the shortcomings in government action

to protect workers. Without adequate worker testing, diagnosis, research and monitoring, the costs to workers and their communities are too great to delay any longer. Prevention is certainly more important than cure.

A steering committee of the Hamilton workers occupational health and safety centre, which included the president of Local 1005, health and safety committee members and the president of the Hamilton and District Labour Council, and supported by the Ontario Federation of Labour, made a detailed presentation to this government on July 5, 1985, a copy of which I have here. Nothing has happened since.

In September 1986, the president of Local 1005 was promised a meeting with appropriate ministries by a senior staffer of the Ministry of Labour. Once again, no action. On November 28, 1986, I wrote to the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston) outlining the delays and buck-passing in this attempt. I understand there has been a call from that minister's office saying: "Please resubmit. Somebody seems to have lost all the files." On Wednesday, January 14, 1987, no word, no action.

Is anyone minding the store in terms of the health and safety of workers over there, and is this record of inaction what the Minister of Health or the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye) is so proud of?

ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICES

Mr. Harris: I want to bring a deplorable situation relating to health care in Ontario today to the attention of the members of this assembly.

Janice Walters is a bright, young, North Bay woman who has tried to conceive a child for more than seven years. It appeared her dream would become a reality last year when she successfully qualified for the in vitro fertilization program at Toronto East General and Orthopaedic Hospital, but political realities have shattered that dream. As a sad consequence of Bill 94 and the Liberal government's refusal to deal with real accessibility problems in Ontario, she has been placed on a waiting list that will delay that treatment several years.

Janice Walters cannot wait very much longer. She has another medical problem that requires treatment, an operation that could jeopardize her chances of having a child for ever. She sought help. She contacted other clinics all over North America and in England. She was accepted at the Bourn Hall clinic in England, but a formidable financial cost that the Ontario government will not cover prohibits her from going there.

She refuses to give up. She has now written to Thrill of a Lifetime for help where her own government has failed. It is a disgrace and a sad state of affairs when people have to write to Thrill of a Lifetime to receive basic health care in Ontario. We have failed the people we serve and the people are continuing to suffer.

1340

DIALYSIS UNIT

Mr. Warner: I wish to thank the Premier (Mr. Peterson) for having sent me a letter with respect to the renal dialysis unit at Scarborough General Hospital. I also wish to thank him for acknowledging that this subject has been studied in 1982, 1983 and 1984.

I have a feeling that when the Tories left office they must have left behind in the Premier's office their little book on how to procrastinate and how to delay, because once again the government has announced yet another little study.

This one is incredible. Everyone associated with the health care field knows the renal dialysis unit is needed in Scarborough. The need has been demonstrated. We know exactly what needs to be done. What we need now is action by this government, not more delay. The people of Scarborough ask once again, "May we please have the renal dialysis unit that we so desperately need in our area?"

FINANCEMENT DU SYSTÈME SCOLAIRE

M. Guindon: La rentrée scolaire 1986 a marqué un changement historique dans le domaine de l'éducation en Ontario. La mise en vigueur de la loi 30 et de la loi 75 apporte de nombreux changements dans tout le réseau scolaire de la province.

Nous vivons présentement une période de transition, et il est évident que les lacunes de plus de 100 ans ne seront pas corrigées par un seul coup de crayon. Il y aura de l'adaptation à faire et des choses à changer.

Les conseils scolaires, les enseignants, les parents et les élèves devront tous faire preuve de patience dans cette période de grand changement, mais il est à espérer que cette période d'adaptation ne durera pas trop longtemps.

Il importe que le gouvernement trouve rapidement les réponses à diverses questions, principalement en ce qui a trait au financement. Il faudrait un financement plus équitable du système catholique, sans quoi la loi 30 aura été futile. Après tout, les catholiques ne doivent pas être les parents pauvres de l'éducation dans notre province.

Il faudra aussi que le gouvernement trouve d'autres moyens de financer l'éducation en français. Le coût des manuels, des ressources audio-visuelles et du matériel d'informatique en français est considérablement plus élevé que celui des mêmes ressources en anglais. Par conséquent, le gouvernement devra être en mesure d'apporter un financement qui reflète cette réalité.

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTRY

COLLEGE GOVERNANCE

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: Today I want to announce changes to the governance structure of the 22 colleges of applied arts and technology in Ontario. These changes follow extensive consultation with and advice from the college community, including Walter Pitman, who reported to me in June 1986.

The initiatives I am announcing today will update and strengthen the college governance mechanisms, which have remained effectively unchanged since their inception more than 20 years ago. At the same time, the changes will increase communication and consultation within the college community system and will make for more effective management of the colleges. They are another measure of the major initiatives brought forward by my ministry during the past 18 months to improve significantly the educational environment and opportunities for Ontarians.

The changes have four major components.

First, each college will be required to establish a council with representation from college faculty members, administration, other staff and students. The council will provide advice to the college president on a wide range of academic issues, including program and curriculum standards, teaching methodology and standards, grading and promotion policies, student appeals, and student awards and scholarships. Subject to guidelines to be established by the minister, the specific size, composition and responsibility of the council will be determined by each college in accordance with its particular needs.

Second, college boards of governors will be opened up and strengthened. In particular, the membership of each board will be increased to include one student, one faculty member, one member of the administrative staff and one member of the support staff of each college; the policies and procedures governing the nomination and appointment of external board members will be revised, with particular emphasis on the need to ensure appropriate representation of

Franco-Ontarians, women and the college's ethnocultural community; and the development of board orientation and development programs will be promoted and facilitated.

L'élection des représentants du personnel et des étudiants se fera conformément aux directives qu'établira le Conseil des affaires collégiales de l'Ontario. Ces personnes seront appelées à participer pleinement aux affaires relevant d'un conseil d'administration. Cependant, les membres internes d'un conseil d'administration n'auront pas le droit de voter tant que les questions qui risquent de soulever un conflit d'intérêts n'auront été résolues et tant que l'examen de leur rôle n'aura pris fin, ce qui pourrait prendre encore deux ans.

En troisième lieu, le rôle du Conseil des affaires collégiales de l'Ontario sera redéfini. Le Conseil avisera de façon objective le ministre après avoir étudié en profondeur les points de politique qui touchent à l'ensemble du système collégial; il surveillera les projets mis en oeuvre dans d'autres pays ou provinces et déterminera s'il conviendrait de les introduire en Ontario; et il conseillera le ministre en ce qui a trait aux plans de stratégies à long terme pour le système collégial.

Le Conseil continuera de désigner les membres externes du conseil d'administration des collèges et, du moins pendant un certain temps, d'assurer la responsabilité des négociations collectives et de fixer les salaires et les conditions de travail du personnel non syndiqué.

Finally, I will be establishing a Colleges Collective Bargaining Commission to review and advise me on the effectiveness of the current collective-bargaining regime. The legislation governing collective bargaining in the colleges has not been reviewed since its implementation and the commission will undertake a comprehensive examination of the existing legislation governing negotiation, including the issue of bargaining rights for part-time college employees.

The commission will comprise a single person whose final report is to be submitted by the end of 1987. I expect to announce the appointment in the very near future. The regulatory and administrative processes necessary to implement the changes I have announced today are expected to be in place by the early spring.

Last year, the college system successfully negotiated a two-year collective agreement for academic staff. The initiatives I have announced today continue the process of rejuvenation and revitalization to which this government is com-

mitted and will strengthen the effectiveness of a college system that plays such an integral role in the economic and social fabric of the province.

It is important to remember that we are building on the existing strengths of an exceptional college system and the changes I am announcing today are part of our total commitment to excellence in education.

RESPONSES

COLLEGE GOVERNANCE

Mr. McFadden: It was interesting to receive today in this House the statement by the Minister of Colleges and Universities (Mr. Sorbara). Some of what he announced today represents the culmination of various reports and reflects the slowness with which the ministry has chosen to act in reviewing the system of governance of our colleges and in bringing in reforms.

When the member for York Mills (Miss Stephenson) was the Minister of Colleges and Universities, she appointed Professor Skolnik to do a report on the college system. That report came in in the summer of 1985 and made a number of recommendations in connection with the reform of the community college governance system, including a recommendation that dealt with the collective-bargaining process. The Skolnik report was not acted on by the government.

The government then asked Walter Pitman to do a report. He did a report through the winter and spring of 1986 and reported in June 1986.

Here we are in January 1987 and the minister is finally moving in response to effectively two different reports that have been commissioned on this system.

This has effectively created a tremendous amount of uncertainty in the college system. I cannot see any earthly reason why it has taken this minister and the government seven months since the Pitman report came out to act on the recommendations the report set out or to respond to that report. To start with, this clearly reflects a lack of action and a lack of commitment to moving rapidly on an urgent issue of community college governance.

1350

I find it interesting that one key matter Skolnik dealt with, collective bargaining, which in many ways was the genesis of the Skolnik report, now has been referred to another study. Page 6 of the minister's statement says he is "establishing a Colleges Collective Bargaining Commission to review and advise me on the effectiveness of the

current collective-bargaining system." Skolnik dealt with that more than two years ago.

What are we going to do now? We are going to have a commission study it. When is its deadline? It is the end of 1987. We presume that we can expect from this that the minister may act, if there is an election and he is re-elected. We expect he will not be, but if that should happen, the government will probably not act until 1988 or 1989 on a matter that was of importance four years ago.

While this statement by the minister is interesting and while the reforms proposed are generally supportive of opening the boards of governors and so on to more community participation, it is simply another of the many actions taken by the government to study, study, study and take no action.

Mr. Harris: Once again, we have another study. It has been mentioned by my colleague, and I think it bears repeating, that we have had studies, commissions and task forces, all symptoms of a government that is marking time and is afraid to act.

One would think that after 42 years they would be champing at the bit to act, but they still act like an opposition party. When they look at the softwood lumber deal, the auto pact, Sunday shopping and dozens of other issues, what do they do? They sit back. They wait to see what somebody else struggles through and then they criticize.

That is what they did for 42 years in opposition. Now they have the obligations of government, and the government should be making things happen, should be doing things positively and should be taking the bull by the horns and acting on behalf of the people of Ontario instead of sitting back, marking time and acting like the silly opposition party those guys were for 42 years.

Mr. Speaker: Further responses, the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere (Mr. Warner).

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: Let us hear the voice of reason.

Mr. Warner: The voice of reason.

With the dazzling speed of a thundering herd of wounded turtles, the minister moves towards reform. It is interesting that with the Skolnik report and the Pitman study, which clearly identified the necessary changes that would assist our community college system, the minister has come forward with a few timid suggestions. He wants to involve the students and the staff, but not in percentages or numbers appropriate to what they represent in the college system, i.e.,

the core of the system, and with no guarantee of a democratic selection of who will represent the students or the staff.

He talks about the need to study the collective-bargaining system when he knows full well that the basis of the difficulties we have had in the community college system is not the bargaining system itself but the lack of sufficient funds from the government. If the minister were serious about trying to support the college system, he would ensure that salary levels were adequate, that funding was adequate, that working conditions were addressed and that staffing requirements were met. If the minister were really serious about reform, he would not tinker around with the Council of Regents. They serve no useful purpose and should be disbanded. He knows that and fails to act.

Finally, if this minister and this government had been truly serious about trying to support a college system, they would never have signed the agreement with the federal government. It is quite obvious the federal government's agenda is to undermine our college system. The federal government is actively pursuing setting up a parallel system to act against the colleges in our province. This minister and this government are parties to that letter of intent. It is a sad and sorry day whose effects are already being felt. Some colleges have already experienced a 10 per cent cut in their funds because of that agreement with the federal government and anticipate that by next year they will have had a total cut of 40 per cent.

While I welcome some of the response to the work this party has done in attempting to support community colleges, I am disappointed by the minimal efforts of this minister.

Mr. Rae: There is an old phrase about the Liberal Party, that it never does by halves what it can do by quarters. The minister's statement this afternoon is an indication of that. The minister already has two serious reports that go back two and a half years in terms of study. We are now going to be facing another round of collective bargaining in an atmosphere of extraordinary uncertainty about precisely who is calling the shots and who is responsible for bargaining. In his statement, the minister creates an even greater sense of uncertainty in simply saying the Council of Regents has responsibility "for the time being."

The minister knows my views and those of the members of my party on the Council of Regents, that it is an assortment of political hacks, that it is not a body which is carrying out its functions

effectively with respect to collective bargaining and that the reality is that the system bargains with the government because the government has the purse-strings. Why not get rid of that illusion and go through at least one round of bargaining where we know who Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy are and where we will have bargaining that deals directly with those who have the money, that is, the minister and the government of Ontario.

ORAL QUESTIONS

PLANT SHUTDOWN

Mr. Grossman: I have a question for the Minister of Labour. Can the minister tell us when his people first became aware that the Cadbury plant was about to close?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I am informed that a letter from Neilson was received late yesterday afternoon.

Mr. Grossman: If the minister had this information late yesterday afternoon on a deal that closed at 4 a.m. yesterday, a letter he apparently got before the closing and before the layoff notice was given, can he tell us specifically what he and his staff did to ensure the company would follow at least a modicum of the guidelines the leader of the Liberal Party laid out during the election campaign in 1985, and thus perhaps at least get an agreement to postpone the notice of layoffs until the minister and his staff had had a chance to talk to it? After he received the letter, what did the minister do that might have avoided this problem?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I returned to the office from cabinet just before question period and had a chance to talk to the director of the plant closures branch. He had some very preliminary discussions with the company this morning. The discussions have been very preliminary in nature. There will be further discussions in coming days.

We are unhappy and displeased with the way in which this matter has been handled by the company. I make no bones about that. We are working on a number of creative solutions to help us in these very difficult situations. I will undertake to report to the House next week, once we have had further discussions, on the nature of those discussions.

1400

Mr. Gillies: So much for justification.

Mr. Grossman: For reasons that are probably becoming apparent, the minister refuses to answer the question. He said he got notice prior

to the notice being given to the employees that there was going to be a layoff and the plant was going to be closed. I have asked him specifically whether his staff said to the company: "Hold off. Don't give notice. Let us come in and talk to you and see what can be done."

Is he telling this House that, after receiving that letter, his staff simply stood back and did nothing, let time pass and let the notices be given and the plant closed without having done one single thing between the receipt of that letter and the announcement of the closing?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: That is not what I said. I gather the letter, which was a four- or five-line letter indicating the company's decision, arrived very late yesterday afternoon, after five o'clock. I could check for the honourable gentleman and confirm it for him, but my understanding is that it arrived in such a manner that it was not seen until first thing this morning.

I regret that, but I think the honourable Leader of the Opposition will want to agree with me that the company itself attempted to leave this matter to the very last minute and has not afforded the government the opportunity to have the kinds of meetings that have been suggested. I find that very regrettable; in fact, I might use even stronger language. We will have discussions in the next while, and I will endeavour to report back to the House.

Mr. Grossman: What is regrettable is that they are so disorganized in that ministry that a letter notifying the minister of a major plant closing lay around overnight, and it was the next day before someone got around to opening a letter informing the minister that a major plant was being shut down.

Mr. Speaker: Is that your question?

Mr. Grossman: That speaks more about the minister's administration and the leadership he is failing to provide than anything else.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Place your new question.

GASOLINE TAX

Mr. Grossman: My second question is to the Treasurer. Is the Treasurer prepared today to fess up and tell the public exactly what the level of gasoline tax is in this province? In effect, he raised the percentage tax on gasoline in this province in his first budget. Will he tell us today what the percentage tax is?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The honourable member knows that in the first session following the change in government we changed the gasoline

tax from the old ad valorem tax, which had been imposed by the previous administration and in which the total revenues had increased by something like 50 per cent, to a specific number of cents per litre. The gas tax is 8.3 per cent a litre; it remains unchanged.

Mr. Grossman: The Treasurer either does know or should know that the effective taxation rate at the pumps is now 21 per cent. He should know that as a result of his tax change we have the circumstance that had he maintained the level of taxation that was in place when he came to office, today Ontario drivers would have \$3.3 million a week back in their pockets. In other words, half a million dollars a day extra is being paid in gasoline taxes as a result of his tax change.

Since the Treasurer is sitting on an admitted \$400-million extra influx of dollars, I wonder how he can justify this half-a-million-dollar-a-day ripoff of the Ontario motorist.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: As the honourable member knows, the initiative to remove the old Tory ad valorem tax, which had doubled the gas tax in five years, was supported by a fairly large majority of this House and that is the justification. When he talks about all this money, he knows the budget for transportation services has gone up in a substantial way. We are improving not only the capital construction budget but also the maintenance budget. We are improving public transit, roads to the north and air facilities. This is what government is all about.

The member should know that taxation is not easy. The only thing that is easy is for a spokesman for the opposition to call for lower taxes. It is our responsibility to establish a fair and equitable tax base, which we have done, and use the money in a fair and equitable way to improve facilities for transportation in the province. We have done that.

Mr. Grossman: Let us look at what the Treasurer has done. On ad valorem taxes, he left on the land transfer tax, which is an ad valorem tax on property. He increased that ad valorem tax, knowing that the price of housing would go up, as it has done monumentally. He has a bonanza from that increase. It is an ad valorem tax on houses.

However, when it came to gasoline taxes—and he and everyone else knew gasoline taxes were going to fall—suddenly he did not like the ad valorem because it would take money away from him. He put in a fixed tax. It has effectively raised the tax on Ontario motorists by half a million dollars a day.

He has admitted that he collected \$400 million more in revenue in the first six months alone than he allegedly anticipated. Is he prepared to say to the motorists of this province that he is going to give back \$160 million of the \$400-million surplus by changing the tax to the old system and is going to give them half a million dollars a day back in their pockets instead of in his election slush fund?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: It is apparent that the buoyancy of the economy of the province, for which I take no personal credit, has returned a substantial increase in revenue on the base that we put before the Legislature and that was approved by the Legislature. I think it is also correct to say our expenditures on approved programs have increased in step with those revenue increases and we feel they are well justified.

As nearly as I can determine, the people who would like lower taxes are still well satisfied with the balance between revenue and expenditures that I and my colleagues have established in the very short time we have been in office and had the responsibility of government.

PLANT SHUTDOWNS

Mr. Rae: My question is for the Minister of Labour. Perhaps he would care to comment. On July 4, 1985, he told the House, "We will be looking at all aspects of plant closures in the months to come." He said the same thing on January 6, 1986, "We are constantly reviewing our policies in terms of initiatives." He said the same thing on February 7, 1986, "There are a number of remedies, and we are actively reviewing them."

He said the same thing on April 30, when he told the House the government was actively looking at the whole issue of severance pay. He said the same thing on May 21 in answer to questions from me, when he said they were looking at permanent solutions. He said the same thing on November 5, 1986, when he was addressing the House. He said the same thing right through the month of December.

The minister is laughing and so is the Attorney General (Mr. Scott). They can choose to laugh when thousands of workers are laid off, but it is not a laughing matter for the people who are being laid off. The Attorney General may find it a source of amusement, but the workers who get their severance notices at five o'clock on a Friday afternoon do not find it very funny, and the Attorney General knows it.

1410

Hon. Mr. Scott: The member should not draw conclusions about why I am laughing. I am not laughing about that.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Does the member have a question?

Mr. Rae: If the Attorney General will stop heckling me, I will be glad to put the question to the Minister of Labour. Would he not agree that the fact he has stood in his place in this House and promised something for month after month and done nothing about it is precisely the kind of conduct that encourages companies to engage in the kind of cowboy capitalism whereby they tell their workers at five o'clock on a Friday afternoon there is not going to be any work the next day?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: No, I would not agree. The whole area of plant closures and how to move into a much more modernistic, consultative role of justification is very complex. If the honourable gentleman, who has such glib and quick solutions, would like to point out the solutions that have been put in place in other jurisdictions in Canada and the United States, I will be willing to receive those submissions. If he will stand in his place and explain to the House the detailed justification solutions in western Europe, I will be prepared to hear those submissions.

I had an opportunity in December to talk to the labour minister from Sweden, a country which members of that party often hold up as a model of justification. That minister indicated that all they have moved to is a higher level of consultation, and indeed to a level of consultation that, at the end of the day, often does not prevent plant closures.

At the end of this period of review, we want to put in place a mechanism that is practical and in which we can deliver some real, new opportunities for workers; a variety of creative solutions, some of which will arise—

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Rae: The minister has been presiding over what is nothing less than a personal tragedy for tens of thousands of workers in the province. He has to understand that. There are workers who have given 20 and 25 years of their lives and are thrown out on the street and they have nothing whatever to show for it. The minister stands in his place and is flip: "Well, you know, I promised it, but it is very complicated." On July 4, 1985, the minister committed himself to dealing with this problem, and he has not dealt

with it. Those are the facts, and that is what is so disgraceful.

How does the minister feel? What answer does he have for those tens of thousands of workers? One has simply to look down the list of those who have been laid off in the past couple of months: 1,600 at Goodyear; 400 at Cadbury's, which we talked about today; 369 at Miracle Mart in Toronto; 254 at Maysfield Property; Ferranti-Packard, in my constituency, just last week; Federal Bolt and Nut; 240 at Inglis, Stoney Creek; Exide Canada, Mississauga. The list goes on. My question for the minister—

Mr. Speaker: Order. The question has been asked.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I say two things. Those layoffs are very difficult. We want to work out new solutions that might in some cases either prevent closures or mitigate layoffs in some ways, and those are the solutions we are looking at.

First, this government has stood strongly in the face of the federal government's attempt to reduce the severance and termination pay protection and indeed the pension protection at the time of closure.

Mr. McClellan: That is pathetic.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: The member can sit over there and say that means nothing.

Mr. McClellan: I said it was pathetic.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I say to my friend the member for Bellwoods (Mr. McClellan), right now the government of Ontario is the only jurisdiction in Canada that is attempting to protect workers' benefits, at the time they are laid off, from the ravages of deduction from unemployment insurance. The member may think that is nothing. Many of those workers who face the tragedy of layoff think it is quite significant.

Second, I remind my friend that the government and the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) have created 154,000 new jobs in this province in the past year, so those workers, many of whom are being displaced, have the advantages—

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Breaugh: If the minister objects to the corporate raid by the Neilson company of the Cadbury company and the closure of that plant in Whitby, which is a very modern facility, why does he not register those objections this afternoon with the Canada Competition Tribunal in Ottawa and stop this corporate raid before it begins?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: The member for Oshawa (Mr. Breaugh) makes an interesting, useful and positive suggestion. As I said to the House in response to the first question from the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Grossman), we found out about this closure late yesterday afternoon. As I now note from one of my staff who handed me a note, the information came to us after the closure was announced to the workers. It was not a matter of attempting to forestall a closure; the announcement had already been made.

However, a number of options are available to the government, and that appears to be one of them. I will be reviewing that with my cabinet colleagues and with the Premier (Mr. Peterson) in the days to come. We will look very carefully at whether Ontario ought to get involved in that regard in an attempt to forestall this situation.

PENSION FUNDS

Mr. Rae: My question is to the Minister of Financial Institutions. It deals with a problem that is very much related to the one we have just been discussing; that is, the consequence with respect to pension plans and pension funds with the plant closures and the termination of pension plans. Can the minister tell the House whether the moratorium which the government has placed on the withdrawal of pension money from pension funds applies to plans that are being terminated or wound up?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: It really does not. The moratorium is being placed on the withdrawal of surpluses on ongoing plans. As the leader of the third party will know, in windups there is always a provision on what happens to surplus funds. Nearly all the plans call for those surpluses to revert to the plans' sponsors, once all obligations of the plans have been met.

Mr. Rae: In other words, it goes back to the company. We have the same ripoff taking place with respect to termination and the winding up of plans that we have with respect to the skimming off of surpluses.

Is the minister aware that in the United States, in the past two years, companies have deliberately wound up plans, whether or not plants have been closed, and taken out \$7 billion in funds in order to get around the moratorium provisions that take place with respect to the American law?

Does the minister intend to do anything to make sure that if there will be a moratorium, it will be a moratorium that will actually work on behalf of those workers who could use early retirement benefits and better improvements in

plans, rather than simply seeing that money go back to the company?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The leader of the third party raises a very serious and very valid point. This is the point I have been making all along in our dealing with the whole issue of mandatory inflation protection and surplus withdrawals. If we push the companies too far, that is exactly what they can do: wind up their plans, withdraw the surplus in that way, and then go to a defined contribution plan as opposed to a defined benefit plan.

This is something the committee will be looking at, but if the provisions in the plans call for windup provisions at present, there is nothing I can do about it.

1420

Mr. Rae: I think the minister is right. There is nothing he can do about it. That is why we need a change in the law and, frankly, that is why we need to see some bigger changes in this province with respect to who is going to fight for the working people and the money that belongs to them. It is their money in those pensions funds, and the government is not prepared to protect it. That is becoming clearer every day.

I would like to ask the minister a simple question. I wonder whether the minister can give us the assurance that when we finally get this legislation before the House for active debate—and we look forward to the House business being arranged in such a way that we can deal with these fundamental questions—if this House in its wisdom decides it does want to have a mandatory indexing provision in there for pensions, that part of the bill be proclaimed and go ahead, or is he going to use the same arguments his colleague the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) did and say, “It is my way or the doorway?”

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The leader of the third party will know we have brought forward our Pension Benefits Act. We have put in place a committee representing labour, management and an independent source to look at the whole issue. I fully expect, and we are committed to bringing forward, a mandatory inflation protection plan. We are committed to addressing the whole area of surplus withdrawal. When that legislation comes before this House, this House is supreme; whatever it enacts, we will of course abide by.

SAFETY IN SPORTS

Mr. Rowe: I have a question for the Minister of Tourism and Recreation. In view of his statement yesterday, will he tell the House how many hockey rinks or other sports facilities in the

province will be closed for operating in an unsafe condition?

Hon. Mr. Eakins: The honourable member should remember that yesterday's announcement was simply a framework within which to work for safer conditions and a safer atmosphere so people can play without the threat and fear of injury. We have no plans at present to go around closing any facilities. We are simply saying that if this government and taxpayers' money are going to help build these facilities, we are entitled to ask something in return, which is simply that they be operated in a safe condition and be safe environments for everyone, young or old.

Mr. Rowe: Since the minister could not answer my previous question, will he assure us today that provincial government funding over and above the current allocation for capital expenditures will be made available, if need be, so youngsters in this province will not be deprived of their arenas and playing time for any period?

Hon. Mr. Eakins: I want to assure members of this House that since I became minister the funding and assistance to sport and other organizations in this province has increased considerably. I can assure members we are going to look after the recreation needs of this province.

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

Mr. Warner: I have a question for the Minister of Skills Development and Colleges and Universities. I wonder whether it is because the Ken Dryden report was such a lucid and candid indictment of the minister's dismal efforts towards youth unemployment that the government did not pay any tribute to the departing youth commissioner, or does the minister have some other limp excuse?

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: Is the member sure he means that question? Ken Dryden left his position as youth commissioner when the office was wound up about seven months ago. The fact is that he agreed to continue on to dedicate more work to his report, which we found to be an excellent report, an excellent analysis. Unfortunately, Ken Dryden decided he wanted to make his report public on the day after I had made a long-term commitment to family members to take them on a vacation. That report was the subject of much commentary and will be the subject of much discussion within my ministry, but I tell my friend that his analysis of what the report said differs very much from mine.

The report said some very interesting things about full employment and about the effectiveness of programs. My reading of the report says that government is doing very well with its programs but should, in Ken Dryden's view, go well beyond programs to an entirely new strategy.

Mr. Warner: I appreciate that the minister had a vacation. The entire government has been on vacation for some time.

The minister will certainly recall, since he has read the report, that on page 51 Mr. Dryden makes the point that what is needed first of all, most of all, is a clear public political commitment to full employment. I would like to know specifically what the minister intends to do to meet that goal.

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: My friend refers to the fact that I was on vacation and says the government is on vacation. The fact is that he has been out to lunch on this issue for a very long time.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Does the minister have a response to the question?

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: Yes, I do, Mr. Speaker, but they just continue to heckle.

If my friend chose to read the entire report, he would acknowledge in this House that the point Ken Dryden makes about youth unemployment and unemployment in general, but particularly youth unemployment, is that it is an extremely complex issue, touching what goes on in the family, within our elementary and secondary schools, within the very nature of our economic structure. He does not suggest any simple solutions. He suggests a new strategy.

Obviously, our government has a firm commitment to full unemployment.

Interjections.

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: I am sorry. It is the force of my friend the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere (Mr. Warner). Full employment. If he looks at the numbers within the Futures program, he can see the dramatic impact this program has had for unemployed young people right around this province.

AUTO PACT

Mr. Callahan: Yesterday the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Grossman) asked a question in the House that is reported in Hansard and to which an answer was not given.

Mr. Speaker: You are asking the question of which minister?

Mr. Callahan: I am asking it of the Premier.

Yesterday the leader of the official opposition asked whether the Premier could indicate three Canadians who think the auto pact should be renegotiated. I wonder whether between yesterday and today the Premier has received any further information on any Canadians he might tell us about.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I should thank the member for the spontaneous and very well crafted question he has brought to my attention today. Yes, indeed, I felt somewhat embarrassed yesterday that I was not on top of all the research when I was asked by the leader of Her Majesty's loyal opposition to name three people; and I am glad the member brought it to my attention today, because I was hoping somebody would ask me a question on any subject and I would give the following answer.

Indeed, I have done some research in the last 24 hours, and I have been able to find only one Canadian, not three. I want to quote, if I may, from the member for St. Andrew-St. Patrick (Mr. Grossman) concerning changes to the auto pact. He said in a speech on April 8, 1981, to the Senate committee on Canada-US relations: "A longer-run concern relates to the future relationship between the Canadian and US automobile industries. In light of the global changes which are now reshaping the industry, the auto pact is now in need of review."

In December 1981, in the Ministry of Industry and Trade estimates, he said: "We have been a leading and vocal advocate for the auto sector in negotiations with the federal government, including identifying changes needed in the auto pact."

I just wanted to bring the members of the House up to date, having done my research and having taken these questions very seriously, as I always do.

Mr. Speaker: It seemed like a very clear response. Do you have a supplementary?

Mr. Harris: I was waiting for the supplementary, but he got cut off by the Premier.

1430

CREDIT CARD

Mr. Harris: I have a question for the Treasurer. Most members of this Legislature, I believe, support the introduction of a general-purpose corporate credit card for use by government employees and government business, and on the basis of the financial saving. However, with respect to American Express, I can understand why the Premier (Mr. Peterson) does not

want to leave home without it. When he goes to Washington next week, they will think he is Premier Anderson, so he needs this card.

Can the Treasurer and acting Chairman of Management Board of Cabinet explain why American Express has been selected by his government to the exclusion of all the credit services offered by Canadian chartered banks and trust companies?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: It seemed like a fairly usable card, I think the honourable member will agree. The officials who were charged with the responsibility of making a recommendation in this regard reviewed the utilization of a wide variety of cards. They had submissions from a number of the banks and others that operate these cards.

We want something that the officials of the government can use whether they are in North Bay or in St. George, Ontario, as well as in New York and in Beijing. It is important that it be a universally recognized card with a wide range of usability and that vendors accept and recognize it. The decision was entered into after a comparison of all of these attributes, and American Express, in spite of its pejorative name as far as the honourable member is concerned, was accepted.

Mr. Harris: The Treasurer's response, eloquent as it was, ignores the rationale that was provided to the employees of the government in their memorandum dated December 19. It states: "The benefits include worry-free business travel"—I guess only American Express can provide that—" \$100,000 travel insurance, a home away from home." These are the benefits in the Treasurer's memorandum to the employees that can be provided only by American Express.

I find it difficult to believe the Treasurer is truly interested in maintaining Toronto as the centre of banking. He goes out of his way now to place a major account for all government business, with a directive to all the civil servants in the Ontario government that they must use American Express.

Will the Treasurer table the proposals submitted by the five Canadian chartered banks, headed here in Toronto, the banking centre of Canada, that were rejected and turned aside in favour of the American Express agreement, exclusive of every other major chartered bank?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The member would know that in using a uniform card there are substantial savings as far as the taxpayers are concerned. We balanced that with the utilization of the card. The

information the member seeks must be obvious, because as far as Visa and—

Mr. Grossman: Table the proposals.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Listen, as far as the proposals are concerned, these are internal documents. They are on the basis—

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I will certainly suggest to the member that we will provide him with whatever information—

Mr. Speaker: Order. A lot of other members will not be allowed to ask questions if we waste the time.

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

Mr. Allen: I have a question of the Minister of Education. In his final report as youth commissioner after three years of desperate struggle with the youth employment problem and with training problems in this province, Mr. Dryden not only rejects the training and youth strategies of this government and of other governments in this country but also makes a central observation that the education system in our province succeeds with its successes but fails its failures very badly. It shuffles them down the stream, shovels them out as dropouts in unacceptable numbers, untrained and unprepared. Then they become nobody's responsibility.

When will the Minister of Education undertake the responsibility for young people until the time and day when they are fully productively employed, in subsequent training programs or in post-secondary education?

Hon. Mr. Conway: Like all members of this House, I read the Dryden report with great care and much interest. I do not agree with the assessment that the honourable member has made about what Mr. Dryden has concluded. Suffice it to say that as a new government we have in our first 18 months in office tried to address, and I believe we have to some degree addressed—

Mr. Rae: You are not so new any more.

Hon. Mr. Conway: The leader of the New Democratic Party interjects about the reformist zeal of the New Democratic Party. I hope he read the weekend press, which reported that it is widely complained that the Manitoba New Democratic Party in office lacks the reformist zeal that the Liberal government is showing in Ontario.

Mr. Speaker: In response?

Hon. Mr. Conway: I do not want to embarrass the leader of the New Democratic Party about how staid, conservative and static is the Pawley administration in Manitoba, because I do not want to upset the member for Welland-Thorold (Mr. Swart). Suffice it to say—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Do you have a response?

Hon. Mr. Conway: I was provoked and I am sorry.

I want to say to my friend the member for Hamilton West that in our first year and a half in office we have moved in a significant and constructive way to make education much more relevant for those many young people who have been leaving the school system. How? We have done so by substantially enriching and expanding the co-operative education programs at the secondary level. We have done so by substantially improving the support for bridges to industry and by improving the funding for adult education. Yes, there is more to be done, and under the leadership of the Premier (Mr. Peterson), in the coming weeks and months this government will be moving to address more comprehensively the concerns the Dryden report has raised.

Mr. Allen: This administration can afford to be reformist by virtue of the support of this party.

The minister may use general terms, such as relevance, significance and comprehensiveness, with regard to his ministry's attitude, but I want to remind him that the ministry under his leadership has not addressed the streaming system, which subverts the progress of ethnic and low-income students. It has not addressed the dropout rate among general-level students, which runs at more than 60 per cent. It has not addressed the problems of the Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions curriculum guidelines, which are of no help to nonacademic students. It has no legislative mandate for adult education or for literacy education. There is no paid educational leave program so that adults can get back into education.

What the government has done with all those problems is to shovel them off progressively into the Ministry of Skills Development, which is a legislative patchwork of meaningless activity.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I am sorry to interrupt the honourable member's speech. Does he have a supplementary?

Mr. Allen: Will the minister follow Mr. Dryden's advice and step into the real world of young people today at the time that it counts, in the four years following the end of compulsory

education, and take full responsibility for their transition into the world of work and independence?

Hon. Mr. Conway: I cannot and do not intend to agree with the member's doomsday assessment of what the educational community is doing at present in the province, and I cannot believe that he really means what he said. I say to my friends in the third party, since they are so interested in these matters, that it was a prominent New Democrat in Manitoba who said of his own government, "I do not mind voting for Jello, but I would like some texture." That is what these people do in office.

Yes, there is more to be done, and under the leadership of the Premier and the cabinet in the coming weeks and months, we intend to address in other ways the issues that have been raised in these reports. We are not going to solve all the problems overnight, but I will not accept the member's assessment, because during the past 18 months, important and positive steps have been taken. More needs to be done and more will be done.

1440

CREDIT CARD

Mr. Harris: Since the Treasurer refuses to table the information that justifies Americanization of the civil service rather than using the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, the Bank of Nova Scotia, the Bank of Montreal, the Royal Bank of Canada and the Toronto-Dominion Bank, the only information I have been able to obtain is that the annual cost components of the bids range from a low of \$55,000 to a high of \$295,000. Could the Treasurer indicate to us whether American Express was the lowest bid and, if so, by how much?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I do not refuse to table the information.

Interjections.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I do not and I did not. This is a matter that was tendered. The material is public and will be made public. As far as that is concerned, I want to make it clear that bids were requested from the cards that are generally available and we picked the very best tender. There is no doubt about that. We will make it available. Why should we do otherwise?

The honourable member is implying that we are trampling on the toes of these little local industries such as the Bank of Montreal. These people have cards that are called Visa and others that are well known and used all over the world.

It was not a matter of picking one by nationality. The idea that we are Americanizing the civil service is totally absurd. We are doing the best thing for the taxpayers and at the same time providing the very best service for our people.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Harris: The Treasurer in his latest little rant now tells me he will table the information. In response to the first question, he said no. I think Hansard will indicate he said no, he would not table it.

My question was whether American Express was the lowest tender. If it was not the lowest, can the Treasurer tell us what was? Can he indicate by how much it was lower? Perhaps it was one of the Canadian banks. Is the Treasurer telling me that Visa, Mastercard and others are not recognized? Is he saying American Express is a better card than the Canadian bank cards?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The Canadian bank cards, Visa, Mastercard and so on, are international cards as well. The member has travelled extensively throughout the world in the past and he will in the future. He knows they are recognized internationally. We selected the card on the basis of price and usefulness to the public service. I do not remember whether it was lowest in dollars. We will look at those numbers and make them available to the member and all the other members of the House who want to look at them. It was picked on the basis of being the best card for our purposes.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The member for Sudbury (Mr. Gordon), the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) and all members will please come to order.

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mr. Foulds: I have a question for the Minister of Community and Social Services. The Minister of Health (Mr. Elston) has confirmed for me that children in northwestern Ontario under 16 years of age in mental and emotional crisis are being admitted to, and may I say incarcerated in, the adult wards of the Lakehead Psychiatric Hospital. Is the Minister of Community and Social Services aware that seven such children were admitted in 1984-85 for an average stay of 84.14 days, almost three months, and that in 1985, 12 such admissions took place for an average stay of 70 days? Does this situation outrage the minister as much as it outrages me? What is he going to do about it?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: My ministry is responsible for 89 children's mental health centres across Ontario, including those in various parts of northern Ontario. Their responsibility does not include direct psychiatric servicing. That is the responsibility of psychiatric hospitals or the psychiatric wards of general hospitals.

I have not discussed with the Minister of Health the situation the member just brought to our attention. I can only presume that such children were in the psychiatric ward of a general hospital to receive those services. If they were to receive the same kinds of services that are made available in a children's mental health centre, I certainly would like that information.

Mr. Foulds: I am absolutely astounded. This minister is responsible for the mental health services delivered to children under 16. It is totally inappropriate that such children are put in adult wards in psychiatric hospitals, and that is his responsibility.

The fact is that there is no such facility for children in northwestern Ontario. Why has the minister not yet approved the proposal for a short-term assessment centre? Is he aware that half the children who are put in the psychiatric hospitals are native children? When is he going to get off his butt and have his ministry accept its responsibility to take care of these children?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: The member will be aware of the fact that in a number of locations, Sudbury being one, we have a direct relationship with a hospital facility with respect to the provision of mental health services to children. There are situations where doctors or parents choose to use the psychiatric facilities of general hospitals for their children's needs. It is as simple as that.

VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS

Mr. Brandt: I have a question for the newly appointed Solicitor General. Some weeks ago, I asked a question of the acting Solicitor General, the member for St. David (Mr. Scott), about the problem of training for volunteer firefighters. It is apparent that the current government has removed all funding for the year 1987 for the training, schooling and experience required for volunteer firefighters.

Will the Solicitor General take one, two or three days of the scandalous revenue being raised through new taxation by the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) and find some means of funding the needed courses for volunteer firefighters?

Hon. Mr. Keyes: It is not entirely accurate to say that every instance of training of volunteer

firefighters is being deleted in 1987, but I certainly appreciate the honourable member raising that point. By the way, I am so pleased to see him back. I thought perhaps with his colouring he might need a visa to get back into the country. I am glad to see he did not and I welcome him back.

The whole issue of training volunteer firefighters has a very high priority. It is something that did not happen until 1984. We do have training in different parts of the province, and it is a very integral part that we want to continue. With some assistance, I would be more than happy to try to get more dollars from our Treasurer for that very purpose.

Mr. Brandt: Let me assure the Solicitor General I was not on a boat cruise. I just want him to know that.

The response of the Solicitor General is totally inadequate. There are literally hundreds of small communities in the north, east, west and south of this province that have volunteer firefighters who require training, but he has virtually wiped out the budget as it relates to the kind of service these people require. The minister knows as well as I do they are in the forefront of fighting fires in very small communities right across this province. Without that training, he is literally putting in jeopardy the lives of not only the firefighters but also many citizens of this province.

Will he reinstate the budget at least to the level of 1986? Will he go to the Treasurer, who has all kinds of windfall taxes, tax increases and deficit increases, to fund this kind of program and see that these people are adequately trained?

Hon. Mr. Keyes: As a very strong proponent of volunteers in all sectors of our society, I am more than happy to try to provide that training. We will be providing training in 1987 and I would be happy to augment it, if we get the support of all parties in our estimates and in the preparation of the 1987-88 budget.

1450

PLANT SHUTDOWNS

Mr. Mackenzie: I have a question of the Minister of Labour. He will recall having been critical, as I was, of the previous Minister of Labour, whose only answer to the problem of plant shutdowns was gut-wrenching comments about how sympathetic he was to the workers and how sorry he was about what was happening, but never any other action. With the disturbing signs we now have of a new rash of plant closures in this province, may I ask the minister what he is doing specifically in the case of the Kirsch-

Cooper plant in Woodstock or in the case of the Richards-Wilcox automotive stamping plant in the city of London?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I note there have been a number of new shutdowns despite the fact, as I pointed out earlier in question period, that the basic trends in terms of new employment are still very encouraging and our latest unemployment statistics in Ontario are far below the national average. At the same time, there have been a number of significant layoffs and closures. Any closure is bothersome, but I have asked the plant closures branch to monitor closely any major layoffs and any shutdowns to see whether any kind of pattern emerges.

We have continued our policy of holding discussions with workers and their representatives and with companies, involving the minister in those cases where we think there is any opportunity that it will do any good. I am very distressed by this latest closure and particularly the apparent attitude of the employer in announcing this closure at the very last minute. I expect we will have discussions with the employer in the days to come.

Mr. Mackenzie: One could call them poor corporate citizens. That is as much as we got from the Tories. In the Richards-Wilcox plant in London, the office staff received notice at 3:30 p.m. that it was their last day; they were finished. The plant workers got notice at four o'clock, just as they were ready to go out the door, that they were finished. The news media heard about it a half-hour later. When did the ministry hear about it? Does the minister consider this adequate notice and is he going to do any more than just talk to them? Given that in the last conversations I had with the minister on this whole question of justification in plant closures he had nothing ready in the way of legislation, can he tell us what his commitment is and if it is one bit better than we got from Russell Ramsay?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: We have been working to try to resolve these very complex issues. I would not want to leave the honourable member with the impression that if one brought in legislative change that would somehow be waving a magic wand. He has been around long enough and he is a practical enough individual to know that even with the toughest legislation, one would be able to affect only a very small number of cases. We are looking at legislative initiatives. I am not happy with the notification that is given to government or workers, because it forestalls the attempts by all sides to avoid these shutdowns or major layoffs. We are looking at a number of

creative solutions which we hope in some cases may be able to forestall these very unhappy situations.

NORTHERN HEALTH SERVICES

Mr. Gordon: I have a question for the Premier. As he knows, there is a serious shortage of doctors in northern Ontario, particularly in the northeast. Can he tell us what significant steps his government is taking to improve this situation?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I cannot give the member the exact numbers at the moment, but mindful of some specific situations where we have problems we are working on, as he knows, there is an incentive program for doctors to move to northern Ontario. Some areas are particularly short of specialists. My honourable friend argues that it is not effective. Some would argue it has been effective. We recognize that we have a distribution problem with respect to doctors in the province, and we are continuing with those programs to try to persuade people to bring those services to northern Ontario.

Mr. Gordon: To be perfectly frank, the program is not working. Doctors who graduate from southern Ontario universities are not moving north. In fact, we know there are immigrant doctors who come to this country who are qualified, and if they could take their internship they would go north. Dr. Robert Sheppard, associate dean of post-graduate medical education at the University of Toronto, says the policy of training only Canadian medical school graduates is one initiated by the Peterson government.

If the Premier cannot get the graduates coming out of Ontario universities to go north in significant numbers, why will he not turn to the immigrant doctors, let them go north and let them have their internships? Right now in the Sudbury region, there is one doctor for every 840 people. In Frontenac county here in southern Ontario, there is one for every 240. Surely he can do better than he is doing for the people of the north and the people of Sudbury.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I am sure the member is aware that the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston) has just arranged a program for, I believe, 24 intern spots for foreign-trained doctors that will go some way towards addressing this problem.

It is interesting that when I was in opposition I raised this with a former Minister of Health, who was beaten in the past election. I raised the same suggestion the member opposite made. He dismissed it completely and said, "We would

never do that." It is interesting that his government would not do that. We have.

Mr. Gordon: What are you doing?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I just told the member, if he would listen, that the minister has moved on 24 intern spots. It is a move forward, and I am hopeful it will go some way towards moving the question.

SOLICITOR GENERAL'S REMARK

Mr. Harris: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Martel: Take the last minute of question period; go ahead.

Mr. Harris: I apologize if the New Democratic Party does not feel it is important, but I would like to raise a matter that I find very serious. I would ask you to check Hansard, Mr. Speaker, because I thought I heard the Solicitor General (Mr. Keyes) refer to a member of this House having difficulty in entering Canada because of his skin colour and needing a visa. I am not sure that is what it was. It seemed to be in the middle of an answer.

I want you to know, Mr. Speaker, that we consider this a very serious matter and a very serious statement and slur if that is what was said. I would ask you to check Hansard and report to us tomorrow whether that is what I heard.

Mr. McClellan: Mr. Speaker, we wanted to raise the same concern with you. We were going to wait until the end of question period, but it is a matter of utmost concern to us. I would ask you to obtain a copy of the Instant Hansard immediately and determine exactly what the precise exchange from the Solicitor General to the member for Sarnia (Mr. Brandt) was, because it was our understanding as well that he made a remark to the effect that he would have thought from the skin colour of the member for Sarnia that he would have needed a visa to get back into the country.

Mr. Speaker: I certainly will accept the request of the members and obtain a copy of Hansard as soon as it is available and review it.

PETITIONS

HIGHWAY CONDITIONS

Mr. Pouliot: I have two petitions that I would like to present today. The first has 2,368 signatures and says the following:

"We, the undersigned, demand decent, safe, well-lighted highways in our area. Our desire is to see a four-lane divided highway between the junction of Highway 11/17 and Thunder Bay. Also, passing lanes at regular intervals between

the same junction and Geraldton. Enough lives have already been lost and we demand action now."

The second petition, on the same important matter, has 265 signatures and says the following:

"We, the undersigned staff of the Geraldton District Memorial Hospital, wish to express our concern about the rising death toll on Highways 11 and 17 and the extremely poor conditions of maintenance these highways have received this year."

1500

CONDOMINIUM LEGISLATION

Mr. Cousens: I have a petition from more condominium owners in the town of Markham and the village of Thornhill, who continue to be concerned with the lack of action by the government to treat condominium dwellings in the same way as residential dwellings. By this point, almost all the residents of Thornhill have signed a petition of one kind or another, pleading with the government to do something about this terrible problem. It is addressed to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"The undersigned beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario strongly urging the government to review the current treatment of condominiums with regard to assessment so that condominiums will be assessed on the same basis as owner-occupied, single-family residences."

If the Minister of Revenue (Mr. Nixon) could begin to act on this problem, the people of Ontario would start to love him dearly.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I bring to the attention of the honourable member and the House that the answer to that petition has already been dealt with by the House, and an act of the Legislature already having received royal assent condominiums are assessed precisely as other dwellings.

TABLING OF INFORMATION

Mr. Wildman: I rise on a point of order referring to standing order 31(i) on page 11 of the standing orders, dealing with petitions. The Speaker will note that the rule is that the ministry shall provide a response to a petition within two weeks of its presentation.

I submitted a petition on behalf of a number of my constituents on November 6; it is referred to as sessional paper 221. On November 24, the Minister of Financial Institutions (Mr. Kwinter) responded for the government to this effect: "The

ministry needs more time to provide a final response to this petition. A final answer will be tabled on or before December 18, 1986."

As yet, we have not had a final response tabled. I ask the Speaker to direct the minister to fulfil his obligations and the commitment he made to this House.

Mr. Speaker: The member has a point of order. I am certain the government House leader took careful note of the comment and will make certain that is corrected.

SOLICITOR GENERAL'S REMARK

Hon. Mr. Keyes: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of privilege to apologize profoundly to the House and to the member for Sarnia (Mr. Brandt) for my offhand, rather flippant remark to him. It was perhaps done in a little jest. Having spent my holiday in bed with the flu and a cold and getting out of bed to come back to the House, I was very envious of the time he obviously spent in a very fine climate. I apologize to him and wish that I had been with him.

Mr. Grossman: In response to that statement by the minister, it is important to note the Solicitor General has purported to apologize to the member for Sarnia, as opposed to all Ontarians. He clearly misunderstands the point that has been made here.

The Solicitor General rose during question period and apparently said something to the effect that, given the colour of the member's skin, he was surprised he did not need a visa to get back into this country.

The Solicitor General's judgement has already been called into question on an earlier incident in this House. The question is not whether something slipped out inadvertently. The question is whether we have in this House a Solicitor General whose mind operates in such a way that this sort of thing would pop into his head as something appropriate to say or something flippant to say. There is no excuse for flippancy. Flippancy does not excuse remarks that indicate a racial overtone, a racial bias, a racial suggestion, which clearly underlay what he said. There is no other explanation for that.

Second, on the question of judgement, a Solicitor General who rises in his place and does not have the good judgement to understand the implication of that kind of comment indicates his total incompetence. It is inappropriate that he serve in the capacity of chief law enforcement officer in this province. It is a travesty that he should rise in this House, make that sort of statement, acknowledge he made that sort of

statement and still not understand the implication contained in those kinds of totally inadequate and inappropriate remarks.

I and my party are totally outraged by those remarks and will be totally outraged if this minister is allowed to serve one more day in the cabinet, particularly as Solicitor General. We expect the Premier (Mr. Peterson) to take immediate action and to put tough actions in place of all the pious statements he has been making on issues surrounding multiculturalism and racial equality in this province.

Mr. Rae: I am sure that if the Solicitor General were to think about it for a moment, he would appreciate that the person he has offended was not, with due respect, the member for Sarnia alone. If he thinks about the context of his remarks and the time in which we are living, it is a remark that is bound to be offensive to literally millions of Canadians and citizens in the province. All of us have said things we regretted. I share the views that have been expressed here today with respect to the inappropriateness of the comments that have been made and I hope the Solicitor General will, on reflection, offer the House a full apology and appreciate and understand the consequences of remarks such as the ones he has made.

Mr. Speaker: The Solicitor General. We are not in a debate; we are on a point of order.

Hon. Mr. Keyes: I realize that. Again not having entirely thought through those words, I would like to accept those comments from both the other parties and rephrase that comment. I apologize not only to my dear friend the member for Sarnia but also to any person who might be offended in any way by the remark I made earlier this afternoon.

Mr. Speaker: The member has withdrawn and apologized.

REPORT

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

Mr. Brandt from the standing committee on the administration of justice reported the following resolution:

That supply in the following amounts and to defray the expenses of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1987:

Ministry administration program, \$876,400; municipal affairs program, \$451,393,300; Ontario municipal audit program, \$210,400; community planning program, \$33,197,500; and the

Niagara Escarpment Commission program, \$1,294,200; and

That supply in the following supplementary amount and to defray the expenses of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1987:

Municipal affairs program, \$11,737,900.

MOTION

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved that, notwithstanding any previous order of the House, changes be made with respect to the consideration of the estimates in the following committees:

In the standing committee on administration of justice: the estimates of the Ministry of the Solicitor General be considered for two hours and 30 minutes followed by consideration of the estimates of the Ministry of Correctional Services for two hours and 30 minutes, the estimates of the Ministry of the Attorney General for 10 hours, the estimates of the Ministry of Financial Institutions for five hours and the estimates of the Office Responsible for Native Affairs for three hours;

In the standing committee on general government: the estimates of the Ministry of Natural Resources be considered for 10 hours following completion of the consideration of the supplementary estimates of the Ministry of Transportation and Communications;

In the standing committee on resources development, the estimates of the Ministry of Labour to be considered for 15 hours; and

In the standing committee on social development, the estimates of the Ministry of Education to be considered for 15 hours and the estimates of the Ministry of Citizenship and Culture to be considered for seven hours and 30 minutes.

Motion agreed to.

1510

ORDERS OF THE DAY

House in committee of the whole.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Before we resume consideration of this bill, there is an outside possibility of divisions this afternoon. The House leaders have agreed on behalf of their colleagues that if there are any divisions, they should be postponed, by agreement, until 5:45 p.m.

Mr. Chairman: Is there unanimous consent of the committee that all recorded votes and divisions be stacked until 5:45 this afternoon?

Agreed to.

ADOPTION DISCLOSURE STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT (continued)

Resuming consideration of Bill 165, An Act to amend the Child and Family Services Act, 1984 and certain other Acts in relation to Adoption Disclosure.

On section 7:

Mr. Chairman: When we ended yesterday, we had carried or stood down several sections. We were down to section 7 of this bill relating to section 158b of the act.

Mr. Cousens moves that section 158b of the act, as set out in section 7 of the bill, be amended by adding thereto the following subsection:

“(1a) In this section and in sections 157, 158a and 158c to 158j,

“‘identifying information’ means information whose disclosure alone or in combination with other information is likely in the circumstances to reveal the identity of the person to whom it relates;

“‘nonidentifying information’ means information that is not identifying information.”

Mr. Cousens: At the beginning of the bill and in the explanatory notes, the bill indicates that the framework for disclosure will be defined in regulations. With the response initially made yesterday by the minister, this amendment is in keeping with the intention of the bill. I would be far happier to have something firm and in place in the definitions so that there is reason to believe there cannot be any kind of confusion in the interpretation of the regulations once they are drafted. “Identifying information” and “nonidentifying information” would be as described in this definition.

It does not go to the extent of answering the question in the way I would have liked to have been able to present it. I would like to have it so that there is no confusion. The regret, as the minister rightly said, is that it is almost impossible to narrow it down. I and our party would be much happier at least to see a clear statement within the bill itself.

These are important definitions. If we come along and put meanings to words when at some point we start releasing identifying information, there will at some future juncture, if another amendment is passed, be a penalty for those who release information without fully understanding the consequences. I think the consequence of identifying information being separated from nonidentifying information for an adoptee is such

that it can make a huge difference in the whole process, because if nonidentifying information were mixed in with identifying information, it could turn out that the adoptee or a person who is in the process of a search would be able to find out who the birth parents are or what some of the background is, and there may have been a request by that person not to have it released.

The more it is understood within the bill that we are saying that nonidentifying information is this and identifying information is that, the happier I will be. I will know then that the regulations that will be drafted will better reflect the intent within the bill itself rather than just the general terminology that people use.

That is the primary justification for this amendment. I hope the House will see it as good clarification and as something that does clarify the true intent of the bill.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: As I indicated to the honourable member yesterday, I substantially agree with the definitions he has here. I do not think there is any quarrel with that whatsoever, with the one exception of the words “is likely in the circumstances.”

That is just so wide open. Particularly if the House agrees later on—and I hope it will not, but if it does—to put penalties in the legislation, it will create a very difficult situation, let us say for workers at children’s aid societies, who will be responsible for the release of the nonidentifying information, not the identifying information. I suspect that those words could create a very inflexible situation. In fact, workers might be reluctant to take any chances whatsoever. They might feel very restricted or feel very confined.

If it is the wish of the House to go ahead with this, I ask that the words “is likely” be changed to “will.” In other words, simply make it very clear that there has to be some clear direction that this information will reveal the identity, as opposed to is likely to reveal it. I have been told by our people that those words are open to such interpretation that almost anybody could be charged with almost anything. That is the difficulty we have.

The second point is that I indicated we would prefer to have these in regulation, as the notes clearly say they will be. It just makes them a little bit more flexible. As time goes on, we may want to make some slight changes from experience in how much more tightly the word “nonidentifying” should be defined. That is not a serious problem; I am just drawing it to the member’s attention.

The third point, and I think we had agreement on this yesterday, is that putting this definition in the statute does not reduce the need to have an expanded description in the regulations themselves, in guidelines and things like that. That is still going to have to be done anyway. I understood the member indicated he accepted that premise.

On that basis, I do not have any great problem. If the member is prepared to put the word "will" in there instead of "is likely to" to make it firmer and to take out that wide discretion, then we will agree. As long as he accepts the premise that the more broadened interpretation will be in regulations and guidelines, then I do not have any problem with it. Basically, how he identifies nonidentifying and identifying is pretty much the way we identify it too. It is not our preference, but—

Mr. Cousens: The amendment proposed by the minister truly keeps to the intent that I am trying to present to the House. Therefore, with the permission of the House, I will adjust this amendment to change "is likely" to "will."

Mr. Chairman: Thank you. "Is likely to" is to be replaced by "will." Perhaps you should reread at least the part starting "identifying information."

Mr. Cousens: "Identifying information" means information whose disclosure, alone or in combination with other information, will in the circumstances reveal the identity of the person to whom it relates."

1520

People in Ontario do not always understand the importance of regulations and the power that exists within them. Since the minister and the ministry are going to circulate them and involve those who will be implementing this bill, acting as counsellors and working with those who are involved with the registrar in different ways, that process, when it works properly, will allow people to bring forward recommendations that will give the regulations true meaning and the correct understanding that they should have that helps differentiate between identifying and non-identifying information. I accept what the minister has said in the spirit in which he said it.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: We are taking a lot of time on something that does not need any time taken on it. We will support this. To put this in is superfluous. The type of definition here is a dictionary-style definition and not something that helps with the interpretation of the act. However, it is vitally important that the regula-

tions define how one determines whether something actually identifies or does not. In my view, this is a useless piece of information to add, but if the minister wants to add it in a superfluous way to his legislation, he has my blessing to do so.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the amendment of Mr. Cousens carry?

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Chairman: To be orderly, we should carry on through this area identified as section 158b and then we will deal with a vote on it at the end.

Mr. Cousens moves that subsection 158b(3) of the act, as set out in section 7 of the bill, be struck out and the following substituted therefor:

"(3) Each of the following persons may make a request of the registrar for nonidentifying information that relates to an adoption:

"1. The adopted person, if he or she has attained the age of 18 years or has the written consent of an adoptive parent.

"2. An adoptive parent.

"3. A birth parent or birth grandparent.

"4. A birth sibling who has attained the age of 18 years.

"5. A person who is a member of a prescribed class, if the person has the written consent of the adopted person and the adopted person would be entitled to make the request or, if not, the written consent of an adoptive parent."

Mr. Cousens: The primary action in this amendment is to remove the discretionary powers given to the registrar in the original paragraph 6 of the bill. We have deleted paragraph 6, which talks about persons who may make a request to the registrar for nonidentifying information.

We believe that paragraph 6, where it says, "Any other person if, in the registrar's opinion, it is desirable that the person be able to request nonidentifying information as if he or she were a birth parent," is giving to the registrar a discretionary power to decide just who can have access to this information. It then means the registrar's powers of discretion in any circumstance become very individualistic and could lead to areas that go beyond the thinking that we could bring to the bill even now.

Throughout the bill, I sense there is a power in the registrar that is very important. It is part of the thrust where we are going to have a person who will work with both the adoptee and the birth parents in the maintenance and the development of a relationship that could exist in the future, depending upon whether they want to do it. Here

alone, in the section dealing with nonidentifying information, do I see "any other person."

Perhaps the minister could say who he means by "any other person." Perhaps the minister could clarify further what he means by "as if he or she were a birth parent." Third, could the minister go further and explain in his own inimitable way what he means by the registrar's opinion bringing something to bear on it?

I am concerned about all three aspects. Rather than just leaving it open to future determination by people reading the bill, I am inclined to believe that right now, unless the minister has very strong, good evidence to prove otherwise, it would be better to remove section 6 totally from the bill. Perhaps the minister could comment on those three points.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: The honourable member is correct when he says this gives a discretion to the registrar that could be questionable. My staff and I talked about this before putting it in. The purpose was to recognize that in some circumstances there develops a relationship between the child and another adult that is very close to being parental but is not. We wanted to provide an opportunity for that type of near parent, if I can put it that way, to have access to nonidentifying information.

For example, let us say a mother dies and her sister takes the child for a time. It could be six months, a year or even two years before that child is adopted by another family. For that time, that sister is the closest thing this child has had to a mother since its own mother died.

Another possible situation would be a foster arrangement with the same situation. The mother died when the baby was very young and the foster parents looked after this young child for a significant time—a year, a year and a half or two years—and were in a near-parent relationship.

We wanted the option or the discretion to be available to the registrar to say, "That relationship was so close to being that of a parent that we want to make available the nonidentifying information." That is discretionary and that is the intent. That is why we put it in. If the other members of the House decide it is not a good or valid reason, we will accept that, but that is the purpose of it.

We agree with the honourable member that it confers a degree of discretion, but it is intended to be a very narrow range of discretion. The guidelines under which the registrar works would clearly define the narrow range in which this is intended to operate. That is our purpose. It is up

to the House to decide whether to leave it in or to take it out.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I agree with the minister that it is important to have some leeway for people with special relationships with children. I have no anxiety about the powers of the registrar and do not support the amendment.

Mr. Cousens: I understand it would be the intent of the minister to have regulations that define who the other person would be.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: It was not our intention to do it by regulation, but as I am sure the member will appreciate, there will be some fairly clear guidelines for the registrar and other people who will be dealing with this legislation about the intent and about how they are expected to operate under the legislation. It was not our intention to put it in regulations, but to put it in the operational guidelines to which people such as the registrar are bound to adhere when they carry out their duties.

I want it to be clearly understood that we had a very narrow group of people in mind here. We could not think of any other way to make this possible and we thought the possibility should exist.

1530

Mr. Cousens: Perhaps the minister can answer this: could a Scout leader, a Sunday school teacher or a classroom teacher qualify?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: No. Clearly, the intent is a person who has a very near parentlike relationship with the child where the child has actually lived with this person for a significant period of time. I can only ask the member to put himself in the role of the registrar when the sister of a birth parent who has died comes to him and says: "I raised this child for two years as if she were my own child before she was adopted by another family. My relationship for those two years was so close and binding that I would like to have available to me nonidentifying information as to how this child has done. I am not a birth parent and I do not have access to that information."

It would be at the discretion of the registrar to decide whether that relationship was sufficiently close and parentlike to provide the nonidentifying information. If he or she, whoever the registrar ends up being, agreed, then it would be made available. If he did not, it would not. That is the discretion the member speaks to, and he is correct; that discretion would be available but it would be within the guidelines we would make available. It certainly would not be a Scout leader

or a Sunday school teacher. We are not talking about that kind of relationship at all.

Mr. Cousens: Can the minister go back a couple of steps? It appears this amendment is lost by virtue of support by the third party. Can he go into the qualifications of the registrar and give us some background about the qualifications, the criteria he will use to determine who the registrar will be and the range of job he is describing? He is giving a level of importance to the registrar that I would like to understand further.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: It is a little difficult. We have not yet selected the registrar. The member will be aware that we are looking at a certain number of people who we think could fill this role. It will be someone who has some experience in the adoption field. It could be somebody within my own ministry who has spent a lot of time with this legislation and with the whole range of adoption. We have a number of people in our ministry who do that on a daily basis. It could be somebody in one of the agencies who has spent a great deal of her or his time dealing with adoption.

We are looking for someone with a great deal of experience in the adoption field who has an awareness of the legislative sensitivities, who has displayed judicious decision-making and who understands that his or her decisions are often going to be borderline. He is going to have to be very sensitive to the whole question of disclosure when that is the intent or not the intent. I do not have a job description per se that I can give the member, but that is the general tenor of what we will be looking at.

I can tell the member that I have made a personal commitment to the enactment of this legislation such that the person will be deemed to be very well qualified and will do the job we want him to do. If the member has some suggestions for us, I will be quite happy to receive them.

Mr. Cousens: Often when one is selecting a person for such a position, criteria are carefully defined so that one can develop a profile of the person long before the position is advertised; and the kind of thing the minister is talking about, that it is a senior job, the professionalism, the background, personal experience in child work and social work and the whole adoption system, would bring it out.

Along the way, I will be following his activities on this when we get to estimates in the future to see that what we are talking about become prerequisites for the registrar. I am not sure how he can approach this through his own ministry guidelines, in the expression he has just

given, to have that high level and make sure it is maintained by the person who is selected for this important job. In some respects it is like being the Ombudsman for the adoption process; this person is going to have far-reaching impact, especially with the discretionary controls he is going to have on decisions that are made here on nonidentifying information and as we go further into the bill.

Mr. Chairman: All those in favour of Mr. Cousens's amendment will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion the nays have it.

Motion negatived.

Mr. Chairman: Next would be a motion of the member for York Centre (Mr. Cousens). It is probably appropriate to carry on with his amendments to different subsections of section 158c and then go to the amendment of the member for Scarborough West (Mr. R. F. Johnston) to section 158c generally. Does that seem appropriate?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I am in your hands, Mr. Chairman, but the amendments of the member for York Centre are small changes to what is currently there. If you wish to go through them now rather than dealing with mine, which confronts the issue at hand in section 158c, that is up to you.

Mr. Chairman: The member for York Centre says he will defer to let the member for Scarborough West go ahead on the whole section 158c. Then his amendments to the subsections will follow.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: It probably does make it easier and more expeditious to deal with the rest of the matters as we make this decision.

Mr. Chairman: Mr. R. F. Johnston moves that section 158c of the act, as set out in section 7 of the bill, be struck out and the following substituted therefor:

"158c(1) The register shall contain the following information with respect to every adoption that has taken place in Ontario and of which the ministry or a society or licensee has a record:

"1. The adopted person's name.

"2. The name of every person whose consent to the adoption was required under clause 131(2)(a) or a predecessor of that provision and was given or was dispensed with.

"3. The name of every person who has applied under subsection (5) to be named on the register.

"4. Any other available identifying information that relates to the persons named in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 or to their relatives.

“(2) When an adopted person who is named in the register attains the age of 18 years, the registrar shall notify the adopted person, and the other persons who are named in the register in connection with the adoption, of the register’s existence and of the adopted person’s right to information under this section.

“(3) If the adopted person notifies the registrar that he or she wishes to receive the information in the register that relates to the adoption, the registrar shall disclose the information to the adopted person, first ensuring that he or she receives counselling.

“(4) If the adopted person requests it, the registrar shall also give him or her copies of the documents referred to in subsection 156(2) (court file) and a copy of the original birth registration.

“(5) Each of the following persons may apply to the registrar to be named in the register:

“1. The birth parent or birth grandparent of an adopted person.

“2. The birth sibling of an adopted person, if the birth sibling has attained the age of 18 years.

“3. Any other person if, in the registrar’s opinion, it is desirable that the person be named in the register.

“(6) On receiving an application, the registrar shall determine whether the applicant’s name is already contained in the register in connection with the adoption and, if not, shall enter it in the register.

“(7) If the adopted person has already attained the age of 18 when the applicant’s name is entered in the register, the registrar shall advise the adopted person of the existence of the new entry.

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“(8) If the adopted person advises the registrar that he or she wishes to receive the information in the register that relates to the new entry, the registrar shall disclose the information to the adopted person, first ensuring that he or she receives counselling.

“(9) The registrar shall ensure that counselling is made available to all persons whose names are or may be disclosed under this section.

“(10) If the registrar considers it in the adopted person’s interest to do so, the registrar may disclose the information to him or her in stages and may delay the disclosure of any information for up to six months after the adopted person’s first request for it.

“(11) If an adopted person who is named in the register has died, cannot readily be found or appears to lack capacity as defined in clause 4(1)(a), the registrar may disclose identifying

information to the other persons who are named in the register in connection with the adoption.

“(12) The registrar may, in cases where he or she considers it appropriate to do so, receive applications, notices and requests through societies and licensees and through child protection or child placement agencies that are recognized outside Ontario, and make disclosures required by this section through them.

“(13) A person who is named in the register and receives information under this section or from an adopted person may disclose it to any person.

“(14) The information referred to in subsection (1) shall be entered in the register within six months of the day section 7 of the Adoption Disclosure Statute Law Amendment Act, 1986, comes into force.

“(15) In the case of an adopted person who is named in the register and who attained the age of 18 years before the day section 7 of the Adoption Disclosure Statute Law Amendment Act, 1986, comes into force, the registrar shall give the notice referred to in subsection 158c(2) within one year of that day.”

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I would like to make a few explanatory remarks about the section and then hold forth again a little on why it is so important. At the end of the minister’s remarks on second reading, I wanted to have time to rebut some of the assertions he was making in terms of his reasons for not going as far as I would like.

To be clear about how this works, the first subsection is no different in particular from that which exists now in terms of what the registry contains. The important new subsection is subsection 158c(2), which indicates it is an active registry, which is to say that on achieving the age of 18, an adopted person shall be informed of the existence of the registry and his right to the information in that registry.

As members will see in subsection 158c(3) and other subsections which follow, the importance of counselling—that is, how this is done, how information is passed on—is enunciated very clearly, including the possibility of the registrar taking several months and providing the information in stages to somebody he feels, for one reason or another, is not properly prepared to deal with the issues involved in the disclosure at that time.

This principle, that counselling is now a lifelong responsibility of the agencies involved in terms of assistance to the parties in the adoption triangle—and which has been accepted now for a number of years in adoptions—is, in terms of

what I am trying to do, still very important. It reflects the principle, which I was trying to enunciate, of getting away from secrecy and getting involved in discussion and dealing with the realities of the person's life.

There are areas in this dealing with the rights of birth siblings and others to have access to the information. I have given full discretion to the registrar. If he is of the opinion that a person other than those listed should receive the information—the kind of person the minister was talking about in the previous section, for instance—that person may receive that information. I have given to the registrar that kind of power.

The other matters are all fairly straightforward in terms of disclosing information if somebody has died or cannot be found. It might be felt by some members that it should be more precise about the length of time we should expect the registrar to look for somebody or to determine that someone cannot be located and that kind of thing. I presume that information will be included in the regulations. I will also accept an amendment if people have an arbitrary time they think would be appropriate.

I want to come back to reasons for this amendment in contrast to what has been put forward by the minister. The minister claims he is balancing the rights of individuals. I am not sure what he means by this, and I presume in the next little while we will get into a pretty precise discussion about what that means.

If one is balancing rights, that means one recognizes rights, and it seems to me that one recognizes some sort of equality of rights if one is balancing them. What this bill does instead is to recognize the paramountcy of certain rights; if I might put it this way, a hierarchy of rights.

In the present act, before Bill 165, the two people in the adoption triangle with absolute rights—that is, the right to veto the information—are the birth parent and the adoptive parent. The two adult participants have had a secret commitment never to disclose, made with the sanction of the government and the government's agencies in Ontario.

What the minister proposes to do is to diminish the rights of the adoptive parent. The adoptive parent no longer will have a veto. The adoptive parent's rights to confidentiality will not be as important as those of the others in the triangle.

In making his explanation about this at the end of second reading, I believe he made a number of fallacious assertions. He said the need for confidentiality for a birth parent is substantially

different from the need for confidentiality for an adoptive parent.

When the minister starts to talk about other members of a birth parent's family, these many years later, perhaps not being aware of the situation and their needs having to be taken into account, I suggest he think seriously about the fact that such is often the case as well with the adoptive family. It is not always clear in an adoptive family that one of the children has been adopted and the others have not. The information might be as damaging and as difficult to deal with for an adoptive family as it is for the birth parent's family and extended family, as he argued before.

Yet the minister has decided the rights of adoptive parents to confidentiality, to never being sought out by a birth parent to locate the child who has been living with them for these many years, are now not as important as they were and do not rank as high in the hierarchy of rights, rather than the balance of rights, as those of the birth parent. I suggest that is illogical. It does not make sense.

To take away the rights of only the adoptive parent maintains a process of secrecy and makes it just as hard to have any kind of reconciliation or reunion or interface between an adopted child and his parents as it was before. It will not change in any substantial way the numbers of adopted children who are able to use a registry and will establish a very strange notion of whose priorities have to be taken into account here.

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I would like the minister to provide to me any information he has that adoptive parents have been a major veto agent in the present registry system and that removing that veto, rather than that of the birth parent, will substantially increase the capacity of an adopted child to find out about his roots.

I do not believe the minister will be able to provide that information to me. I think he will have to admit that the major stumbling block to the majority—the vast majority probably—of attempts to use the registry is the birth parent's veto when that person is on the registry. Probably the largest single problem is that they cannot find the information for some of the older adoptions on record and, therefore, no assistance can be provided anyway. But in cases where a veto is being exercised, I want the minister to show me today why his change with the adoptive parent is going to make any substantial difference at all.

If I thought his change was in any way opening up the system, was in any way going to get past

the notion of secrecy, the notion of privacy and the ensuing concepts of shame, degradation, lack of status, etc., which the adoption process has often developed in this country, then I would perhaps be more happily supportive of what he is doing.

However, it seems to me that he has gone a very small way along the road and has failed to deal with what is at the root of the difficulty we have with the present system. That is to say, rather than accept the social responsibility of the adults involved in the adoption decision in the initial case, rather than understand that the abrogation of the right to know by the child for all these many years should be unthinkable to us, and that it is maintained only in a way that unfortunately fosters problems and pain for that child as the child develops—all that should be undeniable. I do not understand why the minister cannot see it.

I am trying to find the words that will get through to the minister why what he has done does not meet the needs that are out there. The Chairman may recall that yesterday some very provocative things were said about state intervention and how it is wrong to think the state should be able to intervene at this time of the adult adopted child being involved and take away the right to secrecy of the people who signed the contract 18, 20 or 40 years ago.

Will the minister not understand that the state has already intervened? The state already shoved itself into the issue when the adoption decision was made. The state already went in 18 years ago and said: "We are going to deny the right of an individual to know who he is. We are going to take away his birth certificate. We are going to take away any knowledge of who he is."

I would ask the minister, before he starts to pontificate about taking away the rights of adults who made a decision 18 to 20 years ago and who have, we hope, been helped to come to grips with why that decision was necessary, what it has meant in their lives and what it has meant to other people who have been affected by it in the many years past, to consider that the damage which has been done in this system has been done because of state intervention, a system that has promoted secrecy and all the other problems that surround adoption in the first place.

What we are talking about here is an attempt to right the wrong that has been done in the adoption process we have in Ontario. The kind of measure he is taking does not do that. It does not get rid of secrecy as a fundamental part of adoption. It does not get rid of the notion that someone who puts a

child up for adoption should be encouraged by the state to feel that it should be kept a secret, because that is what we do in our present policy. It is something that should be denied for his protection, even though this may cause enormous damage over the years in the development of the child who is put up for adoption.

During the debate yesterday, I heard things which I found absolutely stunning and shocking to me. Certain members in the House, including the minister, drew connections between disclosure of information around adoption and abortion policy in Ontario. They drew connections to it by saying that the determination of whether people would actually give up a child might be based on whether they had to disclose information 18 years down the road. That was mentioned by a number of members, including the minister. I would like the minister today to present any evidence at all that he has that would indicate there is any connection between the two things.

I would like the minister to indicate to me what has taken place in England, Israel or in Finland, where they have had open registries, that would make him think that is the case, and how he thinks it is at all responsible for him to be raising that type of a connection around this issue.

When he does that, he trammels up with emotion the question of shame and the question of what choices should be made by those who find themselves pregnant, rather than dealing with the issue of whether adoption should be an open thing in our society which is accepted as a positive step, an appropriate choice for some people to make, with counselling, so that all the parties to it are aided to understand that is the case. It should be dealt with as openly as possible.

Instead, what has been done with what the minister has presented at the moment and why I have section 158c here—in case the Chairman thinks I am diverging from my topic—is that he has decided he is going to keep it secret. He has decided the birth parents should still be protected above all other things. He has decided people should not have ultimate access to know who they are or to come to grips with that and to confront that, as they must in their development. That is totally inappropriate in 1987.

Rather than going into more detail on this at the moment, I would like to hear some of the rebuttal from the minister on these points and to hear the involvement of other members of this House on these issues which are so fundamentally important at this stage, and which the minister seems to think will await a more enlightened

government at a further time in the future to deal with them somehow, rather than think this parliament at this time might be up to the task.

Without the changes I am suggesting, the minister will not see a substantial difference in the amount of information that is disclosed, and the number of adopted children who are able to find the information they desire so desperately will not be altered either. I would like him to provide the information I have asked him to do, that is, to tell me what the difference will be in terms of taking away the adopted veto and why he feels this secrecy is so important to a system, when we know it is the secrecy that has caused so much of the damage over these many years.

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Hon. Mr. Sweeney: The audible member for Scarborough West knows there is a difference in our thinking on this.

I do not believe that the rights of any person are absolute. I believe that when the rights of one human being come into conflict or contact with those of another human being, they become limited. Basically, that is what two-party consent is all about. It recognizes the mutual rights of two people, whether those two people are the adopted adult and the birth parent, the adopted adult and a birth sibling or the adopted adult and the birth grandparent.

In each case, there is a mutuality of rights that, in my judgement, should be recognized. I suggest that that mutuality of rights and the recognition of it underlies much of the legislation that is passed by this assembly and by the federal House.

I know we are not expected to follow slavishly what every other jurisdiction does. I accept that premise, but surely there is something to be learned by the fact that no other jurisdiction in Canada that has adoption disclosure rules out the necessity for at least two-party consent. None. That says something to us; it says a certain commonality of that respect for the mutuality. That is what this legislation is based on.

The member rather easily dismissed what I think is a significant change, namely, dropping the veto power of an adoptive parent and adoptive family when the child becomes an adult.

The member indicated yesterday that he was not present for the 1977 and 1978 committee hearings, but I think he said he had read the Hansards of those hearings and he understood what was discussed there. I ask him to review the number of people who appeared before us, adopted adults and adoptive parents, both clearly

saying the veto power should not exist and requesting the Legislature and the committee of the day to remove that veto power.

I ask him to look at the comments of his colleagues in his own party with respect to that issue and at the very strong arguments that were made by them, my colleagues and me that the veto power should be reduced. That is not something we picked out of the air; that is a message that was clearly drawn to our attention.

The member asked whether there is any evidence of whether it has made a single bit of difference anywhere. At this moment, we have six cases of adopted adults requesting identifying information and contact with their birth parents. In those six cases, the adoptive parents have exercised the veto, and we can do nothing about it under existing legislation. Once this new legislation is passed, we will no longer have to adhere to it.

That is not wishful thinking; that is the reality at present.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Six out of 100,000.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: Whether it is one or two or three, I do not think the number six, 16 or 60 is the significant issue. The fact remains that the honourable member asked me to give him one single example; I am giving him an example. I am giving him six examples. Were I to say 60 or 600, he would come back with the same response. He should recognize the position from which he is operating.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Mr. Chairman, on a point of privilege: I have been alleged to have said something I did not say.

The minister has had trouble with Hansard in the past. If he likes, I will send it across to him again. I did not say, "Show me one case." If he can find that in Hansard, I would appreciate his showing it to me.

I asked him to tell me how many there were. He found six out of—how many thousand are there on the registry? That is what I asked. Let us be clear about that.

Mr. Chairman: It is not an appropriate point of privilege.

Mr. McClellan: Something was attributed to him that he did not say. It is a point of order.

Mr. Chairman: It is possibly a point of order, but it is not a point of privilege. That is correct.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: The member's amendment is a significant one. It is significant in three ways with respect to the legislation and the intent of the legislation.

First, it changes the whole purpose of the register. The register is not designed and not intended to include all the adoption information of every person who is adopted. That is not the purpose of the register. I can fully appreciate the intent of the member's entire amendment and why he wants the register to be designed that way, but it is not designed that way at present. That is not its intent.

I would oppose and cannot support changing the purpose of the register in that way. Its intent is to be a place, a mechanism, a vehicle to which the various adults participating in the adoption process can go and register. It is not designed for that other purpose. We have record-keeping systems to do what the member is suggesting.

Second, the intention of this amendment is to say that when an adopted person reaches the age of 18, he would automatically be advised that he is adopted. I indicated very clearly to the member yesterday that I do not believe this intrusion is appropriate for us. I say that again. In fact, I think it ties in very much with a comment the member himself made about respecting the confidentiality of the adoptive family. I agree with him.

If we are saying, as I understand the member to be saying, that we must also respect that, as I am saying we must respect the confidentiality of the family of the birth parent, I agree with him. By not identifying that adopted person through a government mechanism as opposed to allowing the adoptive family to make that decision, we are not intruding on its confidentiality.

The member may very well be right—I do not know—about the kinds of harm he suggests could occur to an adoptive family. I do not think he is right, but he may very well be. However, it seems to me there is an internal contradiction when he expresses that kind of concern and at the same time says we should do what his amendment does, and that is to intrude and to provide the information to a person that he is adopted.

Of course, the third purpose of this amendment, and the most significant one of all, is to rule out the whole question of two-party consent. I have indicated to the member that I cannot support that.

The member indicates that we really have not done very much with this legislation, that it is not a very significant change, that we have not considered the paramountcy of some people. Let me point out to the member, first, that the fact we have made the register semi-active—we underline this—only on behalf of the adopted adult surely is a recognition of his or her paramountcy. I think that is obvious. We have not made the register

active on behalf of the birth parent, on behalf of the birth siblings or on behalf of the birth grandparents; it is active only on behalf of the adopted adult. We accept their paramountcy of need.

Second, we have eliminated a number of inhibitions in the existing legislation. We have already spoken to eliminating the veto power of adoptive parents. That is now gone. Adopted persons have told us over and over again that this does block their search and they want it out. It is now out.

We have eliminated the restrictive situation with respect to nonidentifying information. It is now available to the adopted person on request. No consent is required.

As I indicated to the member for York Centre before, we will make that nonidentifying classification as broad as we can, the only limitation being not to include an identifying factor. That was not available before. I think he will find that many adopted persons will appreciate that.

1610

Through the register, we have added the possibility of finding birth siblings and birth grandparents. That was not in before. We have been told over and over again by these people that they want this, that this would be of help to them. We have done that.

The member himself has accepted the validity of it. The whole counselling process is not available at present. We have removed the veto, we have opened up the nonidentifying, we have made the register active on behalf of the adopted person and we have added a counselling procedure. All these are significant moves forward and place us in the forefront of adoption disclosure legislation in this country. The member may find that not quite enough; I suggest it is a significant move forward.

The member alluded to the whole question of state intervention. He said something about my using the term improperly or inappropriately. The member will remember that in his opening remarks he talked about the way in which state intervention blocks certain things. I was trying to make the parallel that state intervention can work in two ways. Just as he objects to the way it is working, I object to the way in which he suggested it works. There are two sides to that coin.

Finally, the member alluded to the relationship with the possibility of abortion. I cannot give him statistics. A number of children's aid societies we consulted about the possibility of these kinds

of decisions told us they were faced with them from time to time.

I can take the member back to the reason the issue was brought up at all. The member for York Centre drew to my attention that when we are passing legislation such as this that refers to the question of adoption disclosure, we should look back at the potential ways in which it could interfere with the whole adoption process in the first place. I suggested we tried to do that. We tried to look at the way in which what we are doing now with respect to disclosure could influence decisions at some point in a person's life as to whether she would go through this process.

I cannot put myself in their position. I do not know what they are thinking. I do not think it is unreasonable to presume that is a factor some young mothers consider, as children's aid societies have told us. The member may dismiss it if he wishes.

Mr. Cousens: I would like to make some comments about this amendment that has been proposed by the third party. It changes very significantly the intent of the legislation before us. I am concerned with a number of the ramifications should this amendment carry. I am strongly opposed to it for a number of reasons.

We can go down to one of the points that is part and parcel of the tension that takes place among all the participants in the adoption process. A gentleman by the name of Pierce, from the national committee for adoption, said, "There is a conflict of interests between one person's interest in information and another's interest in privacy."

That conflict is something this legislation tries to understand, first by giving a fair understanding to the role of the adoptive parents. The adoptive parents' role is an exceedingly important one in society and is not intended to be undermined, as I understand this legislation. There is a sharing that takes place, an openness, and until the adoptee reaches the age of 18, that family unit can be strong without fears of certain things coming into play at a certain magic time when someone's birthday takes place.

This legislation understands something of the thinking that went on for the birth parent at the time of adoption. It goes back to the very basic decision a young woman made when she said, "I will put this child up for adoption." I want to tie in with the concern they would have, with their sense that confidentiality would be maintained for a long time to come and that there would not be some change take place because we changed

the legislation to say, "It is all going to be open." That is not even considering whether it is retroactive. The records are suddenly open and the very decision a person made that was based upon confidentiality is now opened up and so is that part and chapter of his life that perhaps he wants closed.

I wish I could get the exact source of this document I will quote from. I will try to find it for Hansard.

"Those who argue against open records say that confidentiality can be the deciding factor in a woman's abortion or adoption decision. Confidentiality is absolutely critical to the continuance of adoption as an option."

Interjection.

Mr. Cousens: I did not interrupt the member when he talked.

"Regardless of people's religious or ethical convictions, if the only choice you give people in this country is between confidential abortion or a nonconfidential adoption, almost all the people are going to take the confidential abortion route."

I do not know whether that is true. This man by the name of Pierce on the national committee for adoption made that statement. There is a sense that we as legislators have a responsibility to protect the sensitivities of all the people who are involved in this process and therefore to protect the sensitivities of the birth parent, the adoptive family and the adoptee. If we are going to have a completely open record as proposed by the member for Scarborough West, I believe we break down that confidentiality; we break down something of the defence the person has built over a period of time. We change the rules.

I know it is not part of the bill, but I would like to see us find ways to promote more adoptions, ways at least to allow families to adopt other children. By making the change proposed here, I believe we close the door for many people who want to adopt. We also open a door to the past that many people want closed.

The member talks about taking a consensus and having a feeling for consensus. That is an extremely difficult thing for anyone to do. I raised the question myself. I go back to the member for Scarborough West and challenge him to say where he finds the consensus for this amendment, which goes far beyond the recommendations made by the majority of the people in 1977, 1978 and 1984. There is a philosophical approach to adoption that I believe negates in a very serious way the desire and the will of society to protect the confidentiality of the birth parent

and the sense of those who are adopted children not to want to open the door.

One of the things that also has to be considered is the privacy of adoptees. I have been talking to an adoptee in the past several days, a mature woman who does not want her birth parents to find out who or where she is or what she is doing. As soon as we start opening up this whole process as now is suggested, I am inclined to believe we will take away the privacy that is so important to this person.

I believe that trying to have a sense of openness is the fundamental reason the member for Scarborough West proposed this amendment. I want openness and I think the direction we are taking with this bill allows a certain amount of openness that is controlled, can be understood by all parties and will not leave room for surprises that people will not be able to handle.

1620

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Would the minister tell me how many birth parents are exercising a veto?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I cannot at this time, but I will try to get the information for the member. Quite frankly, I do not know how we could know that information. We know that the register, as it is structured at present, allows an adopted person to put his or her name on it, and it allows a birth parent to put his or her name on it. When those two names appear, the person responsible for the register must go to the adoptive parent and ask for permission to have that connection made. That is the only situation in which someone has a veto power. I cannot imagine there is any way we could know that.

I have just been given this information. There are 6,400 adoptees and 3,400 birth parents on the registry; that is approximately a two-to-one ratio. I am not sure I can answer the member's question about the birth parents exercising a veto.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: There are only six matches out of those.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: There are 491 matches. The six referred to the six situations where both the adult adoptee and the birth parent have agreed they wanted to make contact but the adoptive parent has exercised his or her veto.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: How will this bill change that measurably?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: There are two significant changes. First, if we did nothing else but eliminate the veto, then those six potential matches would be completed.

Second, the fact that there are approximately twice as many adoptees as birth parents on the

register gives an impetus to the semi-active role of the register, as proposed in this legislation. Our sense is that a number of those parents, when contacted, will agree to release the identifying information or will agree to a contact. We will not know that until the request is made. Under the present legislation, that is not possible.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: The minister would agree that a way to measurably increase the numbers of connections that would be made would be to make it an active registry rather than a semi-active registry. The approach I am suggesting, having everybody listed and everybody contacted, would no doubt make a significant difference, whereas his would not.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: By making the register active only on behalf of the adult adoptees, we are recognizing the paramountcy of their need. We believe the adult adoptee had no say in the original decision and therefore should be given that extra consideration and assistance. We do not believe the birth parent should have the right to intrude into the life of the adult adopted person, if that is not his or her desire. We do not want to make it active in the other direction.

Once the register becomes semi-active, what percentage of birth parents will refuse to give consent? I do not know. We will have to implement that for a few years to find out. This legislation has been before this House on three occasions in roughly the past eight years, and I am sure it will come before the House again. I am sure that then, as now, we will have the benefit of experience in this jurisdiction. We will also have the benefit of experience in other Canadian jurisdictions, which we have relied on, at least partly, in helping us draft this legislation at this time.

Ms. Gigantes: I would like to add a few words in support of the amendment my colleague has put forward. My interest in this matter is of long standing both personally and in terms of the work of this Legislature, since I was a member of the committee that considered the original changes to legislation that we are working with now going back to the period 1977-1978. That was a minority parliament, as the minister will recall.

In the course of the discussion of the legislation at that time, my party put forward amendments that, as an adoptive parent, I felt very strongly would be of benefit to all parties engaged in an adoption. I remind the minister that we would have had very much the kind of legislation he is now proposing back in 1977-78 had he and his colleagues been willing to support it then.

I want to refresh his memory too about the tone of the discussion and the themes of the discussion that went on then. In committee we did look as though we were going to come to some agreement that would mean a very basic move forward in terms of the rights of the adopted person, upon reaching the age of adulthood, to be able to find out about his or her past natural family.

The minister will probably recall that a cabinet minister at that time, a member of the Conservative cabinet who was also the Provincial Secretary for Social Development, one of the super-ministers, threatened her cabinet colleagues, as an adoptive mother, that she would resign if the amendments were accepted by members of that party. She rose in this Legislature and gave a speech, with one of her adopted children in the gallery, and she talked about how an adoptive family, if we moved in the areas in which we were proposing to move, would be subject forever to the fear of the shadow across the doorstep. Does the minister recall those wonderful phrases?

We have seen time and again over the years new reasons developed for why the person who was the subject of decisions made by adults 18 years earlier, who has been subject to a state agreement with those adults that information shall not be available to the adopted person for 18 years, new reasons why complete openness should not be available to the adult adopted person. Back in those days it was the shadow cast across the doorstep of the adopting family. Those were the phrases; that was the tone of the discussion. We had above all to protect the adopting family against the fearsome spectre of the natural mother appearing and being welcomed by the adopted person. How all this was engaged in the amendments we were dealing with is beyond me, but that is what it was all about then.

Now I find after the passage of years that we have developed a new kind of theme for the reasons we have for not providing full rights to an adopted person. The theme these days is the necessity to protect the natural mother. We are not talking about natural fathers here. Let us face it, we are talking about natural mothers. A natural mother's right to privacy must be respected. The spokesman for the Liberal Party, the member for York Centre—

Mr. R. F. Johnston: The Conservative Party.
1630

Ms. Gigantes: —Conservative Party; it is hard to tell the difference sometimes—talked about the

record suddenly being opened and the natural mother suddenly being exposed to the potential intrusion on her life by an adopted person who, I remind members, is now aged 18. There is nothing sudden about this. This is an event that occurred 18 years ago. Let us be reasonable. The very youngest age that woman would now have attained, 18 years later, is 30. Can anybody give me 29 or 28? That person is now going to be 30 years old.

I find something very objectionable in the notion that a 30-year-old woman, who 18 years ago placed a child for adoption and has had 18 years in which there has been no intrusion on her life—if it is to be called an intrusion—will have her privacy rights infringed in a way that somehow counterbalances the right of the person who for 18 years has had no right to information. I just do not understand that.

It is to perpetuate the system, which is the old system, where to have a child born out of wedlock or a child one could not continue to care for placed for adoption is an act of shame which we surround, through the operations of our state mechanism, in an agreement of secrecy. There are three partners: the state and the two adult parties. Through that secrecy, we maintain that element of shame. Surely we have gone beyond that now.

For people to talk about protecting the rights of the natural mother 18 years after an adoption seems to me to be paternalistic. It keeps the old view of what is involved in giving up a child. It keeps that shame surrounded by secrecy, and now we will protect that woman, who is at least 30 years old, from a decision she made 18 years ago. Anybody who thinks a 30-year-old woman is incapable of dealing with a request from an 18- or 19- or 20-year-old person, or maybe a 40-year-old person—she would be older, of course—for a contact, with counselling, is being paternalistic in my view.

As an adoptive parent, were my adopted child to wish to meet her natural mother 18 years later, I find it really extraordinary to think that mother should be allowed—in fact, encouraged, simply by the words we have in our legislation—to say no. I do not think that is fair. If that happened to my child, I would consider it really unfair. I believe any adoptive parent who cares about a child will feel the same way. It is extremely unfair.

Perhaps one has to be involved personally in an adoption, from one point of view or another, to have the very strong feelings that exist about it. An adoptive parent and an adopted child go

through an awful lot together around that when the information about the adoption is shared early, discussed openly and so on. There are all kinds of tensions that come out of that situation. It is inevitable and it is part of what an adoptive parent takes on and tries to help an adopted child with. It seems shameful that, at 18 years of age and with the encouragement and support of the adopting parent, the child has come to the point of wanting to try to make some contact with the natural parent and is told no.

The minister has told us that 6,000 adopted people wish to find out about their natural mothers. The potential is that some thousands of those will not be able to do that under this legislation. We know natural mothers—and I do not know how many natural fathers are on record—do not come forward to nearly the extent that adopted children do to try to make a match through the current registry system. Part of that has to do with our whole philosophy. I can see why a natural parent would feel reluctant. We have made it feel like an intrusion and a wrecking of privacy. Our whole attitude for decade after decade has been towards secrecy and towards keeping this whole thing closed as long as we can, leaving everybody the right to privacy and hiding things from people.

Natural mothers are going to feel a bit hesitant about intruding on the lives of their natural children. They are going to feel more reluctant about coming forward than adopted people will feel about looking for their natural mothers. Perhaps the minister does not understand but might yet understand that, 18 years after the event, a natural mother can be expected to be able to make a counselled contact with a child she has given up for adoption.

My own experience—here I speak not of personal experience but of the experience of people I have talked to and of the material I have read on the subject—is that where there is a difficulty in the initial contact or where there is a reluctance on one side, people do not proceed. They do not blunderbuss. Through counselling, they say: “It was tried. Now I know. That need has in a very deep way been met. I made the effort. I know a certain amount. That is all I need to know. I need go no further.” That will be the case when there is a difficulty. I do not think there is any doubt about it.

I ask the minister to reconsider. This amendment is an important one. If in 1987 we are not merely going to catch up to where we should have been in 1977-78, he should consider supporting this amendment.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I recognize the personal experience from which the honourable member makes her comments. However, I ask that she recall the number of people who appeared before the committee in 1977-78, again in 1984 and again in response to Dr. Garber’s recommendations. The majority of those people also had personal experiences, whether as an adoptive parent, an adopted adult or a birth parent.

The honourable member holds very firm positions on what we should do, and I respect those, but there were many other people with experiences similar to her own who held different positions. I have to respect those as well. When I spoke yesterday—the member for Scarborough West is correct—I probably used the word “consensus” inappropriately. There really was not. It was not a meeting of the minds I was trying to suggest it was my judgement call that this legislation reflects the majority of the people who spoke to us. That again is not the only way to make decisions, and I have not relied upon that. I say that only to recognize from where the member comes in terms of her experience. I recognize that.

1640

If I could live my life over again, I wish we could go back to 1978 and have passed this piece of legislation. If I had known then what I know now from the experience I have gone through in the past seven or eight years, I would have been much more supportive. The member is right in that I was less willing back in 1977 and 1978 even to go this far. I will admit that. I will also admit I have learned a few things over the years and I hope over the next seven or eight years I will learn a few more things. I accept that point.

I do not accept full responsibility for what we did in 1977 and 1978. There were a lot of other people involved in that decision. I recall that one of the overriding concerns during those debates was the sense of commitment that had been made to people at the time they made the decision, either as adoptive parents or as birth parents.

Ms. Gigantes: Is 18 years not long enough?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: Yes, I agree. I am reminding the member, since she brought up what we did in 1978, that there were reasons at that time for the decisions that were made. I have no regrets in introducing this legislation at this time. It is a significant step forward. We have come a long way. When we boil it all down, with the one exception of removing the two-party consent, we have done just about everything we were asked to do.

I have already said on two or three occasions in the past couple of days that there is a fundamental difference there. The rights of two people are involved. It seems to me what we are doing is allowing those two people to make the decision for themselves. What we are doing as a government, and the word "state" has been used here, is removing ourselves from that choice.

For what it is worth, in the experience of other jurisdictions in Canada on which we have partially modelled this legislation, jurisdictions that have the same kind of legislation as we have, the evidence is that 65 per cent or two out of three of the birth parents who are approached as the result of a discreet search agree to allow the identifying information and, in many cases, agree to have a contact. That is a pretty good record.

As I indicated to the member for Scarborough West, I do not know whether that is going to be our experience here in Ontario, and we will not know for a few years, but it seems reasonable. If there is one thing Dr. Garber's report tells us, it is that there is a certain consistency from jurisdiction to jurisdiction as to what the experience eventually becomes. He said that was something he had not expected to find; nevertheless, he did find it.

It is reasonable for us to expect that if other jurisdictions in Canada that are not significantly different from ours result in 65 per cent of the parents contacted agreeing to allow their identity to become known and agreeing to meet, we can expect those same results here. We will certainly find out.

I ask the member to consider the fact that we as a government, we as a Legislature, are saying to the adults out there—again, we are not talking of children; we are talking of adult adoptees, birth brothers and sisters who are adults, birth grandparents, birth parents—that they are all being given the option to choose. In each case, the two significant adults who are affected by that decision are being given the option in this legislation to make that decision themselves. We are not making it for them. We are saying, "You decide, because you are the two people who are going to be most affected by that decision." I cannot bring myself to take that decision away from them.

Our role as a government is to set up a mechanism, a procedure to permit things to happen; wherever possible, to allow people to choose to let them happen or not happen. I will repeat myself for the umpteenth time. We have gone a long way in assisting and recognizing the

paramountcy of adult adoptees and providing assistance to them. Perhaps the biggest aspect is the active register on their behalf.

I think we are going to see a significant difference in the figures I quoted earlier, which show that roughly half as many birth parents register as adult adoptees. I think the member for Ottawa Centre (Ms. Gigantes) is correct that birth parents tend to be more reluctant to come forward. Therefore, we are providing that extra assistance to the adult adoptee in helping him or her to locate that birth parent but leaving the final decision with the birth parent, as we do with the adult adoptee.

Mr. Cousens: There were a couple of comments made by the member for Ottawa Centre that I feel have imputed a certain kind of motive to the position I have expressed for our party, and words that have never crossed my lips, nor have they been part of the thinking that has gone into the reasons given and the reasons for support of the general intent of the bill before us.

There was one term that has to do with what the member for Ottawa Centre calls "an act of shame," which she was attributing to the feeling of someone after 18 years of having been a mother and having given a child up for adoption. I do not agree that is part and parcel of anything in the thinking I am bringing to the debate.

In fact, when I think of the girl I talked about yesterday in the Legislature, who gave her child up for adoption in 1964, it was an act of giving and of generosity, and it was part of what life is all about. Yet when she did that, there was a sense in which that chapter was closed and over, and her life went on to be lived another way.

I sense that life has a lot of that. People try to impute motives, shame and guilt on other people. There are some who today would do the same thing with veterans from the wars. They would try to ask: "What happened? What went on?" There is a sense in which the war is over, it is done, we have done our duty and it is fulfilled, and that chapter is closed.

The same thing is true within many families and homes. There is a spirit that causes one to pull together the loose ends and to create and build a life that is part of what they want to be. To say that anything we are talking about here is to try to cover up or to put away an act of shame is not consistent with the intent that our party wants to bring to the debate. If someone wants to believe that, that is certainly her view and not mine.

The second point that was made is that all we are doing here is somewhat paternalistic. Again,

I find that an offence to the process that is being followed. An awful lot of people have talked to an awful lot of us and said: "Please allow us to do what we really want to do. We have been protected until now. Please continue to keep us secure."

How many times have there been phone calls to my office or the minister's office from people who have said, "I hope you will not go so far as to remove the objection I have as a birth parent, to remove the secrecy I can now give to it." I do not know the numbers and I do not think the numbers are as important as the feeling they have that their secret is kept. That is not paternalism. That has to do with a contract that was made and with the spirit in which that contract was made, and it has to do with our desire to protect those people who have made that agreement for the fulfilment and betterment of society and have left it with a feeling that they have done something worth while, without the sense of guilt that some people would bring to bear on the thing. That is what I do not like about the arguments presented by the member for Ottawa Centre. We do not need to bring that sense of judgement to the views of our party. That is not part and parcel of our thinking at all, and I am offended by those statements.

1650

Mr. Morin-Strom: I would like to endorse in the strongest sense the amendments put forward by my colleague the member for Scarborough West. While Bill 165 moves in an important way to remove the restrictions on the adoptive parent with respect to access to information for adopted children as they reach the age of adulthood, I do not think it goes far enough. Today, in 1987, we have to look at the kinds of measures my colleague has proposed.

The area I am particularly concerned about is the fact that a veto power is being provided to the birth parent. This is not legislation that gives equal rights to the birth parent and the adopted adult. The adopted person does not know the past history; the birth parent does. That parent has had 18 years to adjust to that fact and to be prepared for that knowledge to go to the adopted child. What really disturbs me is that this restriction goes beyond paternalism. It goes to the point at which the state acts as Big Brother. What really bothers me is any situation where the state knows something about me to which I myself do not have access. It bothers me that I could be in the position as an adopted child of not having access to information to which I know the state and people working for the state have access.

There are very rare occasions—I cannot think of any occasion—where the restriction of information is to the betterment of society when it pertains to personal details about an individual. When we look at individuals as children, there are restrictions to rights. But once a child reaches adulthood, makes a conscious decision, wants to know the history behind his adoption and wants to attempt to make contact with the birth parent, the state should not be stepping in to prevent that from happening. That is what is continuing to happen under this legislation, whereby veto power is going to be continued for the birth parent.

That child has had 18 years without that knowledge. It is time for the rights to turn over after that period and for the right of that child to become paramount. If the child wants that information, now being an adult, he has to have access to it. I do not understand how the state can keep that information confidential from that child.

The minister has reiterated his comments several times that no other area in Canada has moved to that extent in adoption legislation. However, other jurisdictions around the world have. If the minister would look at jurisdictions such as Finland, France and Great Britain, as I understand it, under their legislation currently in force the adopted child has access to information about his birth history.

I ask the minister to look at what he is really doing and to question whether that kind of state intervention and restriction is an appropriate act and whether he is really acting as Big Brother telling us what we may know and what we may not know.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: It is obvious the member for Sault Ste. Marie and I see the interpretation in different ways. The honourable member is saying we are being paternalistic. I suggest it is equally paternalistic, if not more so, if we tell those people what they shall do when they do not want to do it. This legislation leaves it in their hands to make the decision.

I also remind the member that it is not just the birth parent who can refuse to be revealed or identified. The adult adoptee has the same right. If the birth parent wants to know who that adult adoptee is and where he is and wants to have a meeting with him, he or she does not have an automatic right to that. It is only with the consent of the adult adoptee that the information can be given and the meeting can take place. We are saying it is between two consenting adults.

Mr. Morin-Strom: A child has never consented.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: We are not talking about children in this legislation; we are talking about adults only. There is no provision in this legislation for information to be released to a minor child except by the adoptive parents who have that information. That is the choice, the decision, of the adoptive parents. Provision is being made for two consenting adults to release identifying information, to make contact if they want, once that adoptee becomes an adult. The state is not interfering there. We are saying: "The decision is yours. You make it or you choose not to make it." That is what this legislation permits. I think that is the most appropriate way for the government to act.

May I make one observation? I had forgotten a reference the member for Ottawa Centre made about mothers rather than fathers. She is obviously correct that most of the information available is with respect to mothers, but this legislation is designed to deal not just with birth mothers but also fathers, if the information is available. I draw her attention to the searches on page 10, where biological fathers are specifically being referred to. The honourable member is certainly correct in the sense that in most cases information about the mother is what is on the record, but where information about the father is on the record, he is equally affected by this legislation.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: To make one comment, in the minister's last comments to the member for Sault Ste. Marie, he suggested that, through my amendment, we are forcing knowledge of a person's private situation upon him. We do not do that, as I hope he will admit. My amendment tells people of their rights, that they have access to that information, and that if the adopted child chooses to go after that information, which has been withheld these many years, he has the right to that information. That is all the amendment does. It does not say he must receive the information.

Mr. Chairman: Is there any further discussion upon this motion? There being none, shall the amendment of the member for Scarborough West to section 7 of the bill as it relates to section 158c of the act carry?

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion the nays have it.

Motion negatived.

1700

Mr. Chairman: It appears that the next amendment is that of Mr. Cousens to section 7 of this bill as it relates to subsection 158c(2) of the act.

Mr. Cousens moves that subsection 158c(2) of the act, as set out in section 7 of the bill, be struck out and the following substituted therefor:

"(2) Each of the following persons may apply to a society or to the registrar to be named in the register:

"1. An adopted person who has attained the age of 18 years.

"2. The birth parent of an adopted person.

"3. The birth grandparent of an adopted person, but only if the birth parent has died, cannot be found within a period of at least six months or appears to lack capacity as defined in clause 4(1)(a).

"4. An adopted person's birth sibling who has attained the age of 18 years, but only if one of the conditions mentioned in paragraph 3 applies or if the birth sibling himself or herself was adopted and ceased to be the birth parent's child."

Mr. Cousens: This amendment addresses a number of concerns. I hope there will be an opportunity for the government to consider this becoming part of the bill.

We are talking about the adoption disclosure register and who will be eligible to find out the information therein. In subsection 2, we are identifying those people who may apply to a children's aid society, an agency or to the registrar to be named in the register. What we are really trying to do with this amendment is to narrow the field and to identify very carefully that there is only a selected group of people who should be eligible to see, review and obtain that information.

Paragraph 1 is the same as in the bill: an adopted person who has reached the age of 18 years. That is very much part of the intent of the bill. A person is of legal age at that time and has certain entitlements. That is natural.

I have changed paragraph 2 from the original to remove the birth grandparents. I believe there is potential for opening up so many other debates and considerations that go beyond the feelings and understandings of the people who are part of the original triangle. When we bring in the birth grandparents as part of that dialogue for information that would take place through their inclusion in this part of the bill, might we be opening up further discussions and debates within that process that might not otherwise have been there? Might a birth grandparent who has certain

feelings about what went on some time ago see it now as a time to get involved, because he or she thinks certain things should be made known which others do not think should be made known? Might someone who wants, for lack of a better term, to meddle in others' affairs within the family use this as that opportunity?

Those are some of the questions I raise. I hope the minister can answer them. It might be easier to take them point by point rather than to go through all the issues I have within the amendment. If the minister would like to respond to that, we can get a feel for where he is going. Rather than my going through all the points I have on this amendment, it might be easier to just take them seriatim.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I cannot support this change because it goes to a fundamental part of the legislation, which was very deliberately to expand the service. The honourable member is saying that perhaps we have expanded too far, and we are certainly open to debating that, but it is definitely the intent of the legislation to expand the service.

The difficulty I have with his restrictions is that the adult siblings and the adult grandparents cannot stand on their own. He makes it very clear that the only time they would have access to information would be if the birth parent had died.

It does a couple of things. First, it means that any time we received a request from siblings or grandparents, we would first have to search for the birth parent. We have to consider the time factor. Second, there are situations in which a contact with the birth parent may not be in the best interest of the adopted child, now adult, if there was an abusive home situation involved that perhaps precipitated the adoption. We have to keep that factor in mind. There are times when there is no good relationship between the adopted adult and the birth parent, but there could be some very good relationships between the adopted adult and birth siblings and birth grandparents.

The purpose of the legislation is simply to open up those possibilities. The member referred to the number of letters and phone calls that we receive in our offices. One of the things that prompted us to open this up was that very factor. A number of adults know they had a brother or sister who was adopted and they have a sense of feeling close to them. They want to see them again or want to know something about them, but no legislation provides them with any source whatsoever. Even organizations such as Parent Finders, with their limited resources in person-

nel, cannot help them very much. They direct their attention in one narrow focus.

These people have been left out of the process. It was our belief that they should be brought into the process. For that reason, I cannot support the member's proposal. It is too restrictive. It does not permit the siblings and the grandparents to stand on their own. We think they should. That is open to debate.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I concur with the minister in that I find the restrictions placed by the members of the Conservative party unacceptable, and we will vote against them.

Mr. Cousens: The interpretation of the amendment is not to exclude siblings from that information, according to our legal advice. I am particularly concerned about the grandparents. I do not think the minister has indicated whether he has had a lot of phone calls from grandparents interested in this. Could the minister deal specifically with that in his comments?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: The honourable member could very well be correct when he uses the term that some grandparents may involve themselves inappropriately. That is possible. His experience in the clergy would bring him into contact with a number of families in which there are internal problems and conflicts. My experience through the school system and in politics has allowed me to see some of those same situations. I recognize that as a possibility. However, the intent of the legislation is to provide an opening that was not there before which, in the majority of cases, we think will be quite healthy. The counselling process, which is optional if it is nonidentifying but mandatory if it is identifying, would attempt to get at that.

In the legislation, we have the option on the part of the registrar to deny information if he or she has a sense that it will be used in an inappropriate way. Will they always be able to find that out? Probably not, but we have built the counselling process in as a safeguard. We have built in the denial of access to information under certain circumstances, even though there is an appeal process. We have covered those eventualities. We have not covered them 100 per cent. I come back to what I said yesterday in that I do not know how one can write legislation such as that.

We believe this is an important step forward. Frankly, we have not received any information from any source that would object to this and we have a great deal of information to support it. Dr. Garber, in his travels around the country, was very supportive of this as well. He said that it was a direction we should look at, that it would be

appreciated in a lot of situations where the relationship between the adult adoptee and siblings and grandparents is a stand-alone kind of relationship. In most cases that is not true.

1710

The member indicated that siblings would be dealt with in a different way from grandparents. Unless I am misreading him, it looks to me as if paragraph 4 of his amendment says the conditions applying in paragraph 3 also apply here. That is the way I read it, whether or not it was his intent, and that says only if the birth parent has died. That is why I made the connection. If I have made it incorrectly, will the member please let me know.

Mr. Cousens: I hear what the minister is saying. The importance of the registrar comes into focus in being able to analyse and assess the reasons for information, the reasons for contact and the reasons for opening up the register. I again underline the importance of the role of the registrar in dealing with all those who are going to be involved with the registry. It leaves that extra discretion to the registrar to determine the intent—the key word is “intent”—of those who are going to be dealing with that information. I can accede to the point that there will be some grandparents who for all the right reasons will want to deal with this data and become more involved. On balance, there is a point of view that I can respect.

I proceed to the other aspect of this amendment, which is fairly all-inclusive. The amendment removes the original paragraph 4 of subsection 158c(2) where it says in the bill as printed, “Any other person if, in the Registrar’s opinion, it is desirable that the person be named in the register as if he or she were a birth parent.” I was trying to get a similar amendment through. A short time ago it was voted down.

I would like to confirm what the minister’s view is, whether it follows the same intent as the point previously made in talking about someone who is similar to a birth parent, about how close he is and how close the intent of this is to the previous statement. It gives an undue amount of discretion to the registrar. This concerns me and gives me reason not to want that extra discretionary power on the part of the registrar. Can the minister comment on the status of this, if it is similar?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: Yes, the intent is exactly the same as we discussed earlier with respect to a person who has a near-parent relationship with the child. This would have to be clearly described to the registrar. He or she would then have to

make a decision based on the adequacy of the relationship. The member is correct that it is a discretionary call.

Mr. Chairman: All those in favour of Mr. Cousens’s amendment will please say “aye.”

All those opposed will please say “nay.”

In my opinion the nays have it.

Motion negatived.

Mr. Chairman: The next amendment is to section 158c(10) and is also by the member for York Centre.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I wish to make a point. We agree substantially with the amendment of the member for York Centre but we have a new wording for it. I just want to let him know we will circulate this new wording, and either he can change his amendment or I will introduce it as my amendment, so he knows where we are.

Mr. Chairman: We have to have the motion placed before—

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I just wanted to let the honourable member know where we were coming from.

Mr. Chairman: Have you given copies—

Mr. R. F. Johnston: The procedure is that if the government has a motion that normally is brought in first, and therefore it might be easiest just to let the minister enter his motion.

Mr. Chairman: Do the opposition parties have copies of this?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: No. May I circulate them?

Mr. Chairman: Yes, and perhaps the table might have a copy as well.

Mr. J. M. Johnson: Since we will not be receiving copies, can the minister not read his motion?

Mr. Chairman: Yes, he will. I am just giving a moment for the two critics to absorb the motion.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I am ready any time you are.

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Sweeney moves that subsection 158c(10) of the act, as set out in section 7 of the bill, be struck out and the following substituted therefor:

“(10) If a person whose further consent to disclosure would be required is named in the register but has died, cannot be found despite a discreet and reasonable search that has continued for at least six months, or appears to lack capacity as defined in clause 4(1)(a), the registrar may disclose information to the other person named in

the register in accordance with subsection (9) without the first-named person's further consent."

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: The substance of the amendment of the member for York Centre, as I understood it, was to put in a time limit of six months, and we agree with that. That is the significant substance of the change. We agree with that; we accept it.

The only further change we have made is to add the words "discreet and reasonable" in front of "search," which applies throughout wherever the term "search" is used. Thus, in substance, we are accepting the member's change and simply pointing out to him that this is his amendment, with the addition of those two words which we feel are important. If the member can accept that, we certainly will agree.

Mr. Cousens: I am pleased the minister has included this change. When one is doing something such as this in the House, one can quickly go over certain items and not give them the importance they deserve. In our review of it, I am delighted to see the minister come back with this revision. It makes it consistent with previous parts of the bill, and I accept that.

I am pleased that we now can have a set length of time for such a search to take place. Then people know where they are. The calendar seems to go so fast as it is, but it is imperative that people know something else will kick in if it has not been instituted by then.

When we were trying to establish how long it would take, in the initial stage of setting up the register and getting things going they are going to have a tough time anyway. They almost need an extended time in the early stages. But even later on, once things begin to roll, we are not talking about a ministry that is overstaffed or societies that have loads of people. In fact, if the budget the ministry gets from the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) is as minuscule as it usually is, perhaps we should have a longer period than just six months.

Notwithstanding that, it is a reasonable period of time and it should be a sufficient time within which someone can get that information. I am pleased with the minister's response and with his revision.

1720

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I want to be sure our understanding of the member's amendment is correct. The words in the member's amendment which we have repeated are "at least six months." That suggests to us, and we agree, that this is the minimum. I presume that is what his intent was.

Mr. Cousens: Yes.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Chairman: Does the member for York Centre wish to dispense with his amendment to subsection 10?

Mr. Cousens: Yes.

Mr. Chairman: Then the next one is another amendment by the member for York Centre.

Mr. Cousens: I have some questions on section 158d, on which I would appreciate some comment back from the minister. Again we are dealing with the powers of the registrar. Subsection 158d(1) reads, "The registrar may disclose identifying or nonidentifying information that relates to an adoption to any person if, in the registrar's opinion, the health, safety or welfare of that person or of any other person requires the disclosure."

Can the minister elaborate what some of those circumstances would be?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: The member will probably recall that, fairly recently, there were a number of situations where an adopted person needed medical attention. In one case, it was a liver transplant, if I remember correctly. In another case, it had something to do with a blood transfusion. In another case, it had something to do with an infectious disease. In all these cases, it was imperative, during a relatively short time, to get the necessary information. Frankly, we simply could not deal with the consent.

We are saying that when the health, safety and welfare of a person are involved, where one simply cannot go through the procedure—it would take too much time—and the adopted person would suffer, for all practical purposes, as a result of that time lag, the registrar should have the discretion to make available information specific to that need.

I want to be sure members understand this is not intended in any way to short-circuit the normal process where there is not a true emergency. Those situations will be defined very carefully with respect to the guidelines. The registrar will have clear directions, and if there is any sense whatsoever that this is being abused, if we get any information of that, then even tighter restrictions will be placed on it.

Again, we are going to need a little bit of experience to find that out, but the feedback from a number of centres is that there needs to be this provision for emergencies. That is the intent. It has to be a true emergency. Once again, there are so many different sets of unique situations that we cannot list them in advance, but we are going

to define for the registrar the sorts of things we have in mind.

We had a situation, about a year ago, where a person was on the verge of suicide, and the psychiatrist indicated to us that some information about this person's background would be helpful to him, as a psychiatrist, in treating this person. Through this emergency type of thing—we have something similar to it in the existing legislation; it is really a re-enactment in many ways—it was helpful. It does not happen that often but it is the sort of thing where one cannot take the time to go through the normal process. If time is not of the essence, we will follow the normal procedure, but that is the intent.

Mr. Cousens: I approve of that intent and would like to know whether, if the registrar fails to respond to a type of urgent situation that may not be described even by the regulations and guidelines that will be developed, there will be an appeal process for someone to put this quickly forward to try to have special understanding of it.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: As I say, there is no absolute right here; so it is not an appeal in the same sense as the identifying and nonidentifying information by other persons mentioned. However, if there is any indication from any source that the registrar is acting in an inappropriate way, this minister, and I imagine any future minister, will take action on that. There is not the same kind of appeal process built into this, because it is not the same absolute right that the other people have in the legislation.

Mr. Cousens: Subsection 3 says, "A person who receives information under this section in the course of his or her professional or official duties may disclose it further only for the purpose of protecting a person's...welfare." Can the minister explain what he means by that one? That again gives a considerable amount of leeway to people involved in exercising the options of this bill.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: A doctor may need this information to treat his patient in a medical way. If the doctor has other information as a result of receiving this piece of information, he is not at liberty to reveal that for other than the purpose for which the information was given in the first place. In other words, he is bound by the confidential aspect of this legislation as anybody else would be. That is all we are saying.

If information is given for a specific purpose to a specific person, that is the only way in which it can be used. It clearly sends out the message that one cannot be fast and loose with whatever information one might have and say, "Since this

person is my patient and I now have discovered other information that normally would not be made available, I will let him know it." He cannot do that. The legislation clearly says that is not permissible.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: On this point, I would like mischievously to remind the minister of the comments by the member for Sault Ste. Marie (Mr. Morin-Strom) about Big Brother knowing things and government knowing things, an official knowing things the adopted child may not know himself. This is a wonderfully indicative section of that being the case.

Mr. Chairman: There being no further discussion on section 158d, shall that section of section 7 designated as 158b of the act, as amended, stand as part of the bill?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: It was not amended.

Mr. Chairman: Was there not an amendment by the member for York Centre that carried?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: Oh, excuse me.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Did you say "d"?

Mr. Chairman: I said "b" as in "boy." Section 158d, as amended, was defeated.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman: We were dealing with section 158d as in "dog."

Mr. Chairman: That was finished. There was no amendment to it.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Did we take the motion that it carried? I did not hear that.

Mr. Chairman: No, because I was on section 158b, and the amendment of the member for York Centre for the addition of a new subsection 158b(1a) carried. Therefore, I was in the process of carrying 158b, as amended.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: The entire section?

Mr. Chairman: Yes. We have finished with 158b, 158c and now 158d. I was in the process of carrying them.

Shall section 158b, as amended, carry? Carried.

Shall section 158c, as amended, carry? Carried.

Shall section 158d carry? Carried.

1730

Mr. Cousens moves that subsection 158e(1) of the act, as set out in section 7 of the bill, be struck out and the following substituted therefor:

"(1) An adopted person who has attained the age of 18 years may ask the registrar to search on his or her behalf for a specific person in one of the following categories:

"1. A person whose consent to the adoption was required under clause 131(2)(a) or a predecessor of that provision and was given or was dispensed with.

"2. A person who has acknowledged that he is the adopted person's biological father.

"3. A parent of a person described in paragraph 1 or 2 but only if that person has died, cannot be found within a period of at least six months, or appears to lack capacity as defined in clause 4(1)(a).

"4. A birth sibling of the adopted person who has also attained the age of 18 years, but only if one of the conditions mentioned in paragraph 3 applies or if the birth sibling himself or herself was adopted and ceased to be the birth parent's child."

Mr. Cousens: I believe this part of the bill needs to be tightened up. In doing this, we are doing just that, along with some of the intent I explained earlier. Knowing how the House has been going on some of these amendments, I at least have it on the record, and it has much the same intent as I had earlier.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: The only thing I would say is that the same objections I gave for the proposed amendment in subsection 158c(2) apply here, because essentially the amendment does the same thing, only here we are dealing with the search. I object again and oppose it for the same reasons.

Mr. Chairman: Is there any further discussion on this amendment? There being none, shall the motion carry?

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

Motion negatived.

Mr. Cousens: I have an amendment to subsection 158e(4).

Mr. Chairman: Just before that, I assume the member for Scarborough West is not carrying on with his amendments to subsections 158e(3) and (4). Is that correct?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I will be withdrawing all the amendments I provided. They were all tied to my major amendment.

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Cousens moves that subsection 158e(4) of the act, as set out in section 7 of the bill, be amended by inserting after "search" in the fourth line "that has continued for at least six months."

Mr. Cousens: This is similar in many respects to an earlier amendment I made. There is at least

a time attached to the process. When one is dealing with government, one has no idea how long things are going to take. This requires at least some determination of time. To me, it helps those people who have asked for a search and who are involved in that process to know they have at least some expectation for something to happen. I know other things that happen within the bureaucracy take years and years; at least they are going to have something that happens within half that time.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I concur with this amendment.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: As do we.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Chairman: Shall that part of section 7 designated as section 158e of the act, as amended, stand as part of the bill? Agreed.

Mr. Cousens: I am interested in knowing a little more about what is happening in actions outside the province and to what extent there is a policy developed for persons adopted outside Ontario right now. For instance, in dealing with Quebec—

Mr. Chairman: Excuse me, you are on section 158f. Would you move the amendment, please?

Mr. Cousens: I am before the amendment. I am dealing with the concept of what happens between Ontario and Quebec.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Here it is. Subsection 158f(1) on out-of-province adoption.

Mr. Cousens: Out-of-province adoption. Is there a position statement by the province now? What are the numbers of children adopted in Ontario and taken to Quebec and other provinces? Does the minister have any data on that?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: There are two different types of out-of-province adoption, in one of which this province takes a part. For example, in the case of a child living in this province who is placed for adoption with an agency of Ontario but who is eventually adopted by someone, say in Manitoba, Quebec, Michigan or wherever, we assist in the adoption process, even though the final adoption itself takes place in another jurisdiction. In a case such as that, we have all the pre-adoption information and therefore it is available for disclosure under the circumstances described earlier. In other words, the disclosure takes place through the other agency.

The second type of out-of-province adoption is where parents from Ontario go to Manitoba, Quebec, Michigan, Africa or some place and

adopt a child there. In that case, we do not participate directly in the process. We do not have any information and therefore disclosure does not apply. In a case such as that, we offer a counselling service, but we do not participate directly in the adoption process itself.

I am sorry, I do not have the numbers the member is talking about, but my staff have said they will try to get them for him. I do not know. I did indicate to him yesterday, though, that the information we are now receiving is that the number of adoptions by Ontario parents in other jurisdictions is declining very quickly. Whereas it used to be fairly easy to go to Africa or South America, the word we are getting now is that those other jurisdictions are becoming somewhat jealous of the fact that these are their children. They do not want them simply picked up and taken out of the country. I think, if anything, there will be a decline in that. That is as close as I can come at present.

In terms of children from Ontario who are adopted in other areas, the number is not great. It is not a big number, but we will try to get it for the member. I repeat that in a situation such as that where Ontario participates in the process, we deal with the agency in the other jurisdiction and abide by the legislation of that jurisdiction. The only exception to that would be the emergency one, in a question of health and nonidentifying information, but we would work through that other agency.

Mr. Cousens: I appreciate the answer the minister has given. If there is one other underlying concern I have, it is that we should be doing anything we can within government to help those who want to adopt children. The minister should do anything he can to help those working with the Ottawa bureau on adoption, the adoption desk, or to assist those who are coming in from other countries or jurisdictions. It just makes such a difference to that family unit. If they want to adopt a child, we should be able to do it.

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Cousens moves that subsection 158f(2) of the act, as set out in section 7 of the bill, be struck out and the following substituted therefor:

"(2) Each of the following persons may make a request to the registrar for nonidentifying information that relates to an out-of-province adoption:

"1. The adopted person, if he or she has attained the age of 18 years or has the written consent of an adoptive parent.

"2. An adoptive parent.

"3. A birth parent or birth grandparent.

"4. A birth sibling who has attained the age of 18 years."

Mr. Cousens: I want to put on the record that I am concerned about the powers of the registrar and would like to limit them.

1740

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I would like to comment on the preamble of the member for York Centre. It is dangerous to suggest that out-of-province and especially out-of-country adoptions should be promoted and assisted without question by the government of Ontario. There are many cases in which that kind of adoption is appropriate, but I remind members of what has happened to our native population when native children have been adopted by white people.

There is a direct parallel between that and much of the international adoption that has taken place, with children of other cultures and races being brought to North America. The problems those children often experience later on have been quite similar to those of our native population. I refer anyone who is interested to Patrick Johnston's work on child welfare, the native population of Canada and the cultural genocide in which we have been involved and in which adoption has played a key part. Before we go holus-bolus into the notion of supporting out-of-province adoptions, there are a number of caveats we should keep in mind.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I am pleased the honourable member drew that to our attention. He will recognize that in the Child and Family Services Act there is a clear recognition of that difficulty with respect to the native people. Some very strong provisions have been put in concerning the process that has to be carried out. I certainly concur with that comment.

With respect to the proposed amendment, it is similar to the near-parent definition we described earlier. We opposed the previous two amendments and we oppose this one for the same reason. I believe the member understands that.

Mr. Chairman: Shall Mr. Cousens's motion carry?

Motion negatived.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Mr. Chairman, I suggest you take the vote on section 158f, which we have not done.

Mr. Chairman: Shall section 158f stand as part of the bill? Agreed.

Back to section 156 and section 158a, which were stood down. They were stood down for that purpose only. Shall sections 156 and 158a stand as part of the bill? Agreed.

Shall section 158g stand as part of the bill? Agreed.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Why did the minister feel it was necessary to put in clause 158g(1)(a)? Why is that not covered by other powers that are available to people?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I am having difficulty following the member's question. Is he referring to clause 158g(1)(a)?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I am talking about the question of disclosing information that "might do serious physical or emotional harm to any person." Are there not other remedies for that under the Child and Family Services Act and under the Criminal Code?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: Our concern here is that this amendment takes the place of the provisions within the Child and Family Services Act which give certain basic rights with respect to disclosure. We cannot deny those rights without good reason. Therefore, we felt we had to put into the legislation the discretionary power to the registrar if, as part of the counselling process, he became aware of ways in which physical or emotional harm might come to another person.

If I can say this to the honourable member, and I agree it is hypothetical, an adopted person may at a particular time be angry at the fact that he or she had been put up for adoption and say inadvertently or otherwise, "If I find that person, I am going to kill her or harm her." Whatever he says, the registrar may very well feel, "I cannot let him have that information if that is what I think he is going to do with it." That is the intent there. It is a judgement call, but because we are denying a right, we also immediately build into it the appeal process.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: My point is twofold. First, I think there are other means of guaranteeing that, through other legislation, if there is a fear of physical harm. Second, I will raise with the minister, because I find it very interesting, that to my knowledge this is the first time emotional harm has been introduced in legislation that has to do with adults only.

I remind the minister we had a huge debate around the whole question of the need to protect children who were in danger of emotional harm. There are definitions of a child in need of protection. He may recall that for the first time we raised concepts of serious risk and emotional harm which were not in previous child welfare legislation. It is interesting that what he has introduced here is the concept of emotional harm to an adult, one presumes, being a possibility and

included it in legislation of this sort. I find it quite unusual and I am wondering why he has done it. Physical harm I understand, although I think there are other means of dealing with that, but emotional harm is an interesting notion to put into adult legislation.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: The member will be aware of the fact that when we talk about abuse with respect to children in another part of the legislation, there is a reference to emotional harm. I also draw to his attention here that it does not say "to an adult"; it says "to any person." It can apply to either a child or an adult. Granted, it is an adult we are talking about giving the information to in most circumstances. The member is correct in that we are probably talking about another adult. We were not sure of the possibilities. Again, we are stepping into—for us anyway—uncharted waters. After a few years, this may very well prove not necessary and we may want to change it again. It is simply a provision to use if it is necessary. We need the experience to find out whether that is necessary.

I am taken by the member's reference to emotional harm, but the only thing I can say is it was not intended to deal just with adults. It could deal with a child as well.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I am not going to oppose it. I think he should be aware of what he is doing. Emotional harm to a child is already considered under another part of the act, which talks about a child needing protection. The registrar would have an obligation to inform the children's aid society there was a problem and then to make decisions about withholding information.

However, now that the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) is here, I will be interested to know his opinion about this at another time. I do not know of any other legislation which talks about refusal to disclose information because it might be of emotional harm to an adult. I find that an interesting, slightly paternalistic concept.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: The member makes a valid point. It is something we need to be aware of. I will add one other bit of information. The member indicated there were other ways of dealing with this. My staff has just advised me that the adoption-disclosure-register information is not covered under part VIII of the act and therefore does not have the same opportunities available to it that the rest of the act does. That is also part of the reason. I had not thought of that earlier.

Mr. Chairman: Is there any further discussion on section 158g? There being none, shall section 158g stand as part of the bill? Agreed.

Mr. Cousens: I will stand down my question and I will not raise anything on section 158j.

Mr. Chairman: You are standing it down. You are saying you are not going to—

Mr. Cousens: I am not going to ask it all.

1750

Mr. Chairman: Fine. Shall those sections of the act shown here as section 158h and section 158i stand as part of the bill? Agreed.

Mr. Cousens: I have a question of the minister. There was no other place in the bill to ask this question, which is a very sensitive one with many ramifications. Can the minister comment on problems which might come to this bill out of the recently passed Bill 7 on human rights legislation? I can only raise the issue under this section of the bill. When talking about people who could adopt, is it possible for a homosexual couple or homosexual family to adopt children under Ontario law?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I want to make sure that in the minister's answer to this he will tie it to the abortion issue and to capital punishment. That would be important in terms of its relevance. If you rule that in order, Mr. Chairman, then anything is.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: Can I make one simple observation which I think answers the member's question? The welfare and the best interests of the child are paramount, and all decisions will be made on that basis. That is as far as I can go.

Mr. Cousens: We were talking about fees and expenses that would normally be paid by someone who wants to adopt a child, and under this section we are talking about the fees people pay for the services of different agencies. Is the minister going to answer outright whether a homosexual couple will be able, because of Bill 7, to adopt a child here in Ontario?

Mr. Chairman: I am anticipating the comment from the member for Scarborough West. I do not have a copy of the original act in front of me. To rule whether this is in order or out of order, we have to have all the sections and I have to examine them to see what it is.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I would be glad to help you, Mr. Chairman. There is a section in the act which talks about the powers of children's aid societies or an agency to determine suitability, but I do not think you can determine that the section we are now discussing in any way deals with the question of who is eligible to be an adoptive parent.

Mr. Chairman: I take it that was a comment, rather than a point of order.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I believe it is out of order, because there is nothing in this section which deals with who should be an adoptive parent.

Mr. Chairman: Is it your suggestion that we now adjourn to get the act out to make the ruling on your point of order?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I hope the member will desist from his line of questioning.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I believe the member for Scarborough West is correct. I do not see the connection. The only purpose of fees is to make it optional that fees be charged that would recover some costs. That is the only purpose of this section.

With respect to the member's other question, I cannot answer above and beyond saying that a children's aid society has the discretion to make certain choices, but the deciding factor is the best interests of the child. I cannot know in individual circumstances what that decision would be. The member can take that for what it is worth.

Mr. Cousens: I appreciate my answer, Mr. Chairman. We should proceed to my next amendment.

Mr. Chairman: Fine, thank you. Is there any other discussion on section 158j? There being none, shall section 158j stand as part of the bill? Agreed.

Section 7, as amended, agreed to.

Section 8 agreed to.

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Cousens moves that the bill be amended by adding thereto the following section:

"8a(1) Section 150 of the said act is amended by adding thereto the following subsection:

"(4a) A person who contravenes subsection 156(2) (court file), subsection 158a(1) (adoption information), subsection 158a(4) (research) or subsection 158i(3) (court file) is guilty of an offence and on conviction is liable to a fine of not more than \$1,000.

"(2) Subsection 160(5) of the said act is amended by striking out '(1), (2) or (4)' in the first line and inserting in lieu thereof '(1), (2), (4) or (4a)'."

Mr. Cousens: Simply put, I would like to see that there is a fine attached for people who abuse the registrar and the process. If that were the case, this would be one way of having some watching over the files to make sure there is not going to be a simple abuse and no penalty.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: We oppose.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I have to oppose as well. We talked about penalties in the bill, and we do not think it is necessary at this stage. Time may prove that it is, and in that situation we can bring in an amendment to the legislation. That has happened many times. However, we do not have any reason to believe it is appropriate at this time. We want this legislation to go forward with the most positive outlook and frame of mind possible. I do not think it is appropriate to put in a penalty clause. I oppose it.

Mr. Chairman: All those in favour of Mr. Cousens's motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion the nays have it.

Motion negatived.

Sections 9 and 10 agreed to.

On section 11:

Mr. Cousens: I have a question of the minister and his staff. Does this motion take effect now? Is it worthy, on the basis that we accepted the first amendment to section 158b?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I understood that we had an agreement with the member that adding the identifying and nonidentifying definition would not restrict us in putting a broadened definition in the regulations. Therefore, we feel this is

unnecessary. I understood the member had accepted that.

Can I go one step further? To be sure that is understood, I have a very minor amendment to the wording that I feel my colleagues will probably accept, if I can distribute these. It is essentially the same. It simply does what we agreed to.

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Sweeney moves that clause 203(e) of the act, as set out in subsection 11(1) of the bill, be struck out and the following substituted therefor:

"Further defining 'identifying information' and 'nonidentifying information' for the purposes of sections 157 to 158i."

Motion agreed to.

Section 11, as amended, agreed to.

Sections 12 to 15, inclusive, agreed to.

Bill, as amended, ordered to be reported.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I thank all my colleagues for participating in this debate, for being as supportive as they were able to be and for accepting the honest differences of opinion we had on it.

On motion by Hon. Mr. Sweeney, the committee of the whole House reported one bill with certain amendments.

The House adjourned at 6 p.m.

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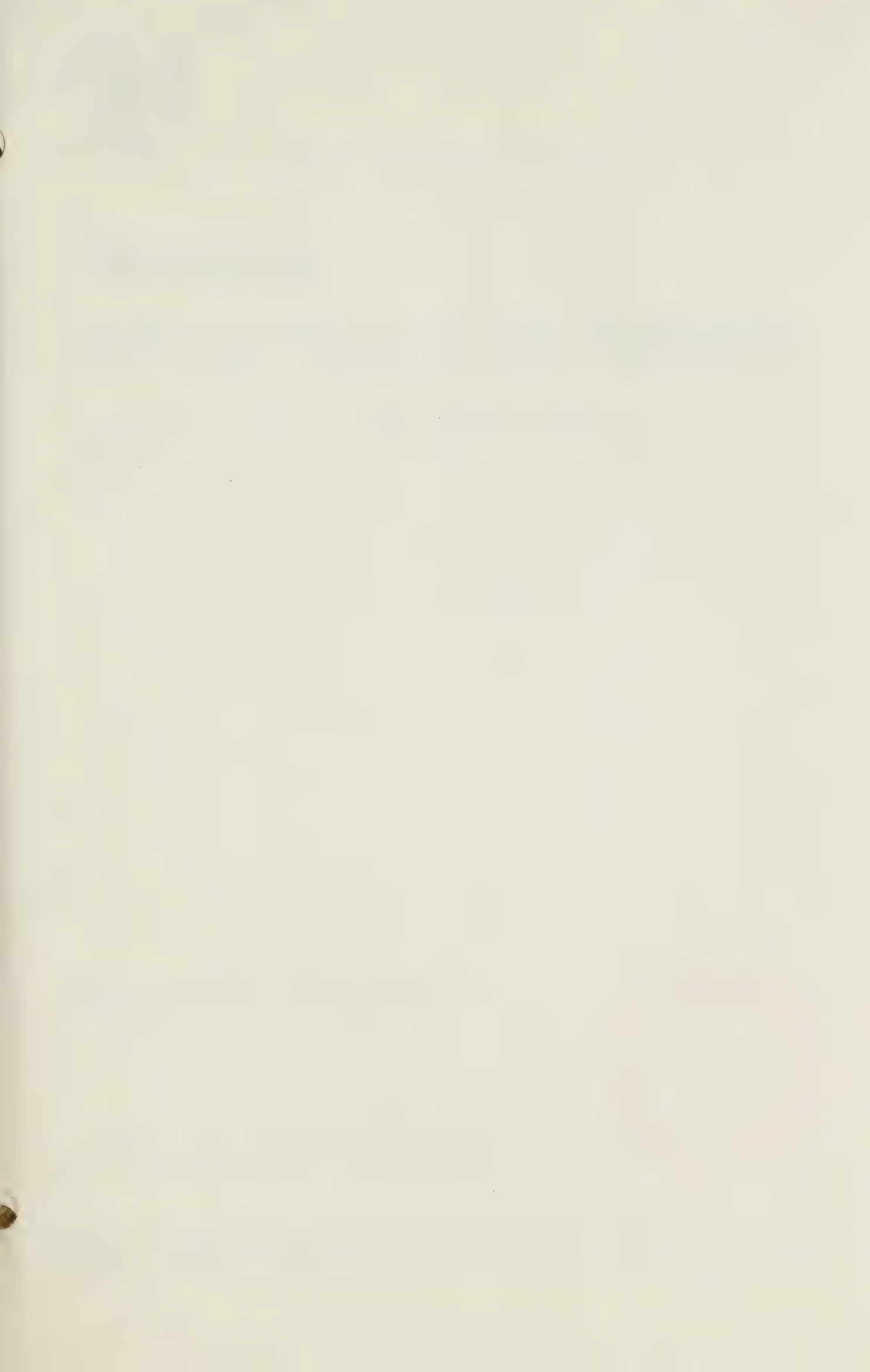
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Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 33rd Parliament
Thursday, January 15, 1987

Speaker: Honourable H. A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday, January 15, 1987

The House met at 10:01 a.m.

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

FARM TAX REDUCTION PROGRAM

Mr. Pollock moved resolution 73:

That in the opinion of this House, the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr. Riddell) in conjunction with the Minister of Revenue (Mr. Nixon) should immediately move to increase the farm property tax rebate from 60 per cent to 70 per cent.

The Deputy Speaker: The honourable member has up to 20 minutes for his presentation and he may reserve any portion of it for the windup.

Mr. Pollock: I am pleased and proud to introduce this resolution. It is straightforward and self-explanatory. This is an issue which is of great concern to me and many of my constituents. I hope all members of this House will support this resolution, particularly the Minister of Agriculture and Food and the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Grandmaitre), because theirs would be the two ministries that would implement the increase.

As the resolution states, I feel the government should move quickly to increase the farm property tax rebate from 60 to 70 per cent. The implementation of this would require only minimum changes. I also feel that if the government were to increase the farm property tax rebate, it would show it really does care about the farm community, contrary to popular belief.

This type of rebate is considered to be one of the fairest types of assistance, because not only a chosen few but everyone in the farming business would be helped. The farm property tax rebate was introduced some years ago to adjust for inequities in the property tax system. The rebate was increased from 50 to 60 per cent a few years ago by the Progressive Conservative government. I feel the current financial crisis facing farmers in Ontario justifies the increase to 70 per cent.

For the benefit of some members who may not be familiar with the way the farm property tax

rebate works, I will briefly outline the basic criteria. Application forms are sent out on an annual basis on information provided by the municipality and the assessment department. For a person to be eligible, the land must be farm land which is currently in use as farm land. The farm must produce either \$5,000 worth of products and goods in eastern or northern Ontario or \$8,000 in southern Ontario. If the land is sold for development, all the money rebated to the farmer over the immediate past 10 years has to be paid back with interest at 10 per cent.

The definition of what the farm may produce is quite broad. It is to produce anything that is useful to man. This includes everything from Christmas trees to nurseries. Also eligible are horse-breeding farms and farms that raise fur-bearing animals.

Further, if a house is situated on the farm land, it is eligible for a rebate of 60 per cent, provided the house is occupied by persons who are involved in actual farming. The rebate is paid only after the minimum 60 per cent of the applicable property taxes are paid by the farmer.

Corporations which are at least 50 per cent Canadian-owned and which meet other criteria that I have already mentioned are eligible for the 60 per cent property tax rebate.

In general, this system has worked well over the past years, but as with everything else, it must be kept in tune with the times. That is why an increase to 70 per cent is warranted.

There was a proposal a few years ago to have the system changed and to have a farmer pay tax on his house and one acre of land. This sounds practical until one starts to take a look at the overall process. For example, for a farmer in a predominantly farming municipality, possibly 80 or 90 per cent of the money to run that municipality comes from the farming community. To take the taxes off the land and the farm buildings would mean that the mill rate on the house and one acre of land no doubt would have to double.

A municipality has to have money to operate. That is a recognized fact. Proponents of this system suggest the government might even give a grant to the municipalities to make up for such a loss of tax revenue. This would mean the tax

rebate would be paid to the municipality and not to the farmer. The municipality is not totally made up of farmers; so the nonfarming residents in that particular municipality would also be getting some of the assistance.

I maintain that we have a good system in place, so why change it? The farm tax rebate is working well. It just has to be updated to 70 per cent.

The financial problems facing farmers in Ontario are well known and well documented. While most of the people who are employed in other industries receive an effective wage increase of an average of four per cent, the farmer is faced with a reduction in income on cash crop farming of 30 per cent.

Reduced commodity prices caused by the trade war between the United States and the European Community are a main contributing factor. Another financial burden of the farmer is the increased property tax. In a community with which I am familiar, the property tax went up by 7.9 per cent and is likely to go up by another 7.9 per cent next year. In other areas, the taxes are going up at an even greater rate.

Another cost that the farmer must absorb is the extremely high insurance rate. This province is still in a period of rapidly rising liability insurance rates. The small family farm also has to absorb a large portion of the cost of environmental insurance as a result of the implementation of the spills bill. One farmer said his liability insurance went up by \$100. The fact of the matter is that the small farm owner is not the one responsible for the greatest amount of pollution; it is primarily the large corporations. A fairer system to establish the rates charged to the farmer could be worked out to assist these people through a very tough financial time.

1010

The farm tax rebate is one of the fairest rebates of subsidies paid to farmers. Some farmers invest heavily in farm machinery and farm land in order to produce more food. In some cases, they receive an interest rebate on the money borrowed. If the end result is that the farmer makes less than the minimum wage, then I would have to say that particular subsidy is a subsidy to the processors, the supermarkets and the consumers, not the farmer.

After the government was sworn into office on the front lawn of the Legislature, it promised the world. It said it would double the amount of money going to the farming community. That has not happened. In my estimation, actual money going into the Ministry of Agriculture and Food will be about 1.5 per cent of the total budget

committed, while 1.4 per cent of the Ontario budget was paid to farmers back in 1981-82. Those were difficult times for everyone—the farmer, the small businessman and, in some cases, big business.

During 1985-86, the economy certainly has improved for the business community but not for the farmer. One of the reasons for this is that the European Community gives large subsidies to farmers in those countries and, as a result, the American government is subsidizing its farmers to the tune of billions of dollars. The government of Saskatchewan has increased its subsidies, as have Alberta and Manitoba. Here in Ontario the farmer receives only about 1.5 per cent of the total budget committed, an insignificant amount above what he received during the recession and nowhere near double.

Looking back over the past year, I have real doubts about how committed the Liberal government is in seeing a financially sound agricultural industry in Ontario. In the face of setbacks suffered by various sectors of industry, the minister seems extremely reluctant to offer any assistance. By increasing the farm property tax rebate to 70 per cent, the government will be helping farmers of the province who are falling behind the inflation rate.

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture has reported that farm incomes for 1985 are at only 55 per cent of the 1973 level. I am certain that if other sectors of the economy were forced to survive on 55 per cent of the income they were earning 13 years ago, Ontario would be in drastic financial shape. The truth is that Ontario is one of the most prosperous provinces in Canada and Canada is one of the richest countries in the world. It is extremely unjust that the people who feed the people of Canada as well as the people of many other countries of the world are forced to live at the poverty level.

A move by this government to help farmers get through these rough times would be a great step forward. The minister has the resources at his disposal. Let him take this small step and help our food producers.

The cost of increasing the tax rebate from 50 per cent to 60 per cent a few years ago was in the neighbourhood of \$20 million annually. The cost of an increase from 60 per cent to 70 per cent would, no doubt, be in the \$20 million area again. I regard this as \$20 million well spent.

The Deputy Speaker: Does the member wish to reserve the remaining time for his wrapup?

Mr. Pollock: I do.

Mr. Hayes: I want to compliment the member for Hastings-Peterborough (Mr. Pollock) for introducing this resolution to increase the farm property tax rebate from 60 per cent to 70 per cent. A resolution of this nature will help farmers somewhat. When a resolution such as this is introduced in the Legislature, whether it is passed or not, more than anything else it further highlights the problems the agricultural sector is faced with today.

Even though I support this resolution, I cannot help but think that here we are coming up with another Band-Aid solution to a very serious problem, another piece of legislation that will help a little in the immediate future but does not address the real problem, and that is the question of commodity prices or fair prices for farmers' commodities.

I do not want to get off the track, but it upsets me to have this government continue to introduce programs that help some farmers when it seems to be so hesitant in dealing with the real problems in agriculture. Existing programs help in some cases, and this resolution to increase the farm property tax rebate will also help in some cases. However, why is this government so hesitant in tackling the real problem head on? Why is this government and why was the last government so afraid to push for supply management? Are they waiting for family farms to disappear totally, letting the multinationals take over as they have in other industries?

We are in a situation today where we have to put more funding into agriculture and also implement incentives to encourage farmers to stay on the land. Rather than continue to put Band-Aids on a large wound, we should be doing everything in our power to give farmers a just price for their commodities and their labour. That is supply management. When this is accomplished, we will not have to discuss government programs and subsidies nearly as much as we do now in this Legislature.

I support this resolution wholeheartedly. I know it is a step in the right direction to help farmers immediately, but let us not stop here; let us get some political will in this House and work seriously towards preserving the family farm in Ontario and Canada.

Mr. G. I. Miller: I am pleased to rise this morning and have the opportunity to speak on resolution 37, brought forward by the member for Hastings-Peterborough, "That in the opinion of this House, the Minister of Agriculture and Food in conjunction with the Minister of Revenue should immediately move to increase

the farm property tax rebate from 60 per cent to 70 per cent."

I am a farmer and also an elected representative for one of the most agriculturally productive areas in all of Canada. I know about the difficulties facing the family farm. We have many tobacco farmers in our area and, as we all realize, this is an industry that has been hit very heavily in the past few years. It is our responsibility as members of the Legislature to take any necessary steps that will help ensure that farming remains a viable economic alternative. It is this responsibility that compels me to support the resolution put forward here today.

The Ontario farm tax reduction program is not perfect; I do not think any government program is. The farm tax rebate program does, however, put money back into the farm economy of Ontario and that must be considered the bottom line.

The resolution put forward here today asks that we support an increase from the current level of farm tax rebate assistance. The farm tax rebate program was established in 1970 under the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Act. In 1970, 1971 and 1972, the level of assistance was 25 per cent of the municipal and school tax base on farm assessment. This was increased to 50 per cent in 1973 and to 60 per cent in 1984. The member for Hastings-Peterborough is asking that in 1987 the rebate level be increased again, this time to 70 per cent.

1020

The farm tax rebate program is unique in that it is a co-operative effort of three provincial ministries. The Ministry of Agriculture and Food provides the overall guidance and funding, the Ministry of Revenue provides the assessment information and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs provides the administration. The advantages or disadvantages of the current three-ministry system is something that should perhaps be debated at another time.

The farm tax rebate program does not provide tax rebates to farmers; it provides tax rebates to land owners, and therein lies one of the inequities of the present system. In order to receive the farm tax rebate, one does not have to be a farmer. All one has to do is to own property assessed as a farm for the current taxation year. There is no doubt that a great many land owners in Ontario live on and farm their property. These are the people this program is designed to assist.

There are, however, some glaring examples of land owners who are not farmers in the true sense but who are receiving substantial rebate assis-

tance under the program. In 1982, Stelco Inc. received \$55,697 in rebates. In 1983, Dofasco Inc. qualified for \$35,807. These companies qualified for farm tax rebates because they owned agricultural land that was intended for industrial development. In one five-year period, Windfields Farms Ltd., one of Canada's most prosperous horse farms, received \$100,000 from the rebate program.

I have brought forward these examples in an effort to ensure that members of this House have a clear and complete picture of the program we are discussing this morning. In that same spirit, I would like to take the time now to outline the full eligibility requirements for the farm tax rebate program.

In order to qualify under the current program, the property in question must be assessed as a farm. The applicant must be a citizen or resident of Canada, at least 60 per cent of the property tax must already have been paid, and the property on its own, or as part of a larger farming operation, must produce a minimum value of \$8,000 worth of farm products in a normal production year in southern Ontario or \$5,000 a year in northern Ontario.

If these criteria are met, the property is eligible for farm tax rebate. Farm owners who have had their farm tax rebate appeal denied are provided with an avenue of appeal through the Farm Tax Rebate Appeal Board. This board is made up of seven independent farmers from across Ontario. As I mentioned earlier, a farm property in southern Ontario must produce \$8,000 worth of farm produce per year to qualify for the tax rebate program. To reach the \$8,000 figure a farmer would have to grow five acres of tomatoes or 31 acres of corn or sell eight head of beef cattle for slaughter or keep four sows from farrow to finish.

One of the big questions surrounding the farm tax rebate program is whether the money is getting out to the people who need it the most. As is the case with any financial assistance program, this question must be answered before it can be judged a success. The farm tax rebate is not, as we have already seen, limited to the farmer in financial difficulty. The money in the program is allocated on a universal basis to the farm property owners of this province.

If we increase the rebate to 70 per cent, as this resolution suggests, we will increase the assistance to those who do not need it as well as to those who do need it. There should be no question that the property tax burden on farmers is substantially greater than that on nonfarmers.

The question is the point at which the rebate becomes higher than the amount needed to bring rural property taxes to the same level as those in urban areas.

When the farm tax rebate program was first introduced in 1970, there were 224,000 farm properties considered eligible for the rebate; the program cost that year was something in the neighbourhood of \$15.8 million. The rebate was increased to 50 per cent. There were approximately 158,000 properties considered eligible; that is about 70 per cent of the 1970 figure. The total dollar value of the program in 1973 was approximately \$28.1 million. In 1984, the rebate was increased again, this time to 60 per cent. The number of properties considered eligible was 149,000, 33 per cent below the number in 1970. The farming community is decreasing.

The cost of the farm tax rebate program in 1984 was \$93.9 million. In the 1985-86 fiscal year, 154,000 properties received rebates totaling more than \$101 million. The program budget for the 1986-87 fiscal year is expected to be \$104 million.

In 1970, the average farm property received a rebate of \$71. In 1973, that figure was \$177. In 1984, the average rebate was about \$627. In 1985, it was more than \$655. For 1986, that figure is expected to be close to \$700 per property.

There is no doubt that a good many of these dollars reach the farmers who need them the most. Unfortunately, some of this money is also reaching those farmers who are able to make it financially without government assistance.

The farm tax rebate program was originally conceived as a way to correct the inequities of the property tax system. The farmers of this province were paying more than their fair share under the current farm tax rebate system.

The Ontario government is committed to the concept of helping farmers help themselves. I think we have done that. The provincial budget for agriculture has increased by 39 per cent. In the fiscal year 1983-84, the province's budget for agriculture was \$303 million. In 1986-87, that figure is expected to be more than \$430 million. We have committed ourselves to programs designed to put money back into the pockets of deserving farmers. The best example of this is the recently announced OFFIRR Plus program, the Ontario family farm interest rate reduction.

As my time is running close to being finalized, I would like to say in conclusion that although I have some reservations concerning the program,

I will be offering my support to the resolution brought forward here today.

Mr. J. M. Johnson: I also am very pleased to have the opportunity to speak in support of the resolution of the member for Hastings-Peterborough, "That in the opinion of this House, the Minister of Agriculture and Food in conjunction with the Minister of Revenue should immediately move to increase the farm property tax rebate from 60 per cent to 70 per cent."

While a 10 per cent increase does not seem to be very much, it would amount to approximately \$18 million to \$20 million this year and would be money well spent as it would help alleviate some of the serious financial problems farmers are facing these days in the world marketplace.

The farm property tax rebate is one of the best benefits Ontario farmers receive from the government; indeed, it is the largest single annual agricultural expenditure made by the Ontario government. This year, the estimated expenditure is set at \$104 million for this program. Compared to the millions of dollars going to our western farmers, especially in Alberta and Saskatchewan, through their new provincial subsidization programs, this 10 per cent increase would be a very small amount of money to spend to assist further our Ontario farmers.

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No one knows the cost of the US farm bill, so called, but it is estimated that it will cost the American taxpayers anywhere from \$20 billion to \$30 billion a year—billions of dollars, not millions. The European Community also financially subsidizes its farmers so heavily that many farmers in Europe receive 50 per cent to 70 per cent of the cost of production of food from their governments. Our Ontario farmers are forced to compete in this very unfair world marketplace. Surely an increase in the farm property tax rebate program requested by this resolution is not unreasonable under these circumstances.

A few years ago, the member for Don Mills (Mr. Timbrell), then Minister of Agriculture and Food, proposed that the system be changed, that farm land and buildings be exempt from taxation and only the farm house and one acre of land be taxed. Many farmers supported this proposal, but many were opposed to it, such as the member for Hastings-Peterborough. It is my understanding that many Ontario Federation of Agriculture executives and members still favour this proposal. I for one feel there is some merit in it and it should be given consideration.

I would like to suggest to the government that if for any reason it is opposed to increasing the

percentage of the farm tax rebate, it should at least give consideration to reviewing the alternative proposal to eliminate all tax on farm land and buildings.

Perhaps at this time, the proposal of the member for Hastings-Peterborough may be the best way to go. The government has made a commitment to preserve farm land in Ontario and, naturally, nearly everyone supports that concept. It seems logical to me that the best way to preserve farm land is to preserve the farm. If the farmer can stay on his land, he will do so, and by doing so, he will preserve the land as well.

An increase in the farm tax rebate is one way we can help farmers cope with their ever-escalating costs. The consumer would also benefit and therefore would be supportive of this proposal, because this would contribute to keeping the cost of food products at an acceptable level while at the same time assisting our enterprising but financially depressed farmers to remain in operation.

At this time, I would like to draw to the attention of the House once again a very serious problem we are having with the present farm tax rebate system because of the inability of the Minister of Municipal Affairs to administer this program.

In September of each year, the ministry mails out the application forms to a list of farm owners provided by the municipality and the assessment department. In September 1986, only half the forms were mailed out on time. The other half may or may not have been mailed out by this date. On November 24, the member for Durham-York (Mr. Stevenson) questioned the delay. I raised the same question on December 18, and on Tuesday, January 13, the member for Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry (Mr. Villeneuve) also brought this concern to the attention of the minister.

In response to the question from the member for Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry, the Minister of Municipal Affairs admitted that the delay had been caused by human error and he apologized. At the same time, he also stated that all application forms had been mailed and he had received the co-operation of the post office in Toronto to make sure all these applications were in the mail. Unfortunately, that is exactly what his staff has been saying for more than a month. The standard reply has been, "It was mailed today." That reply was given to my office on several occasions from November up to and including last Friday.

Since the minister has admitted that his ministry and the Ministry of Government Services erred in not providing half the farmers of the province with their farm property tax rebate forms in October when other farmers received them, it is incumbent on both ministers to explain to the members of this Legislature why it took more than three months to discover that there was an error and why staff kept advising the members and township clerks that the forms had been mailed out when they had not.

I feel the Minister of Agriculture and Food should share in this comedy of errors. Surely he has the responsibility to see that the farmers of this province receive all the financial assistance that is available to them through programs such as this one.

In my riding of Wellington-Dufferin-Peel, the clerks of West Garafraxa and East Garafraxa each received 10 to 15 calls last week from farmers asking about the farm tax rebate program forms.

It is not acceptable that the ministry can allow this type of development to occur, take so long to resolve it and constantly tell the members, staff members and clerks of this province that the forms have been mailed out when they have not been. To take three months to discover the error is not acceptable. I hope the minister will clear this matter up now once and for all.

Since the minister admits his ministry was at fault in causing this undue delay, thereby penalizing thousands of farmers by delaying the property tax rebate forms up to four months, would the minister give consideration to paying interest to these farmers for that period of time? I hope next year's program will be administered more efficiently and with the same degree of excellence with which the previous government handled its program.

In conclusion, I request all members of this Legislature to support this excellent resolution brought forward by my colleague and good friend the member for Hastings-Peterborough.

Mr. Charlton: I too rise to support the resolution by the member for Hastings-Peterborough, although during the course of my comments, I am going to make a number of criticisms. This is the second time since September we have debated a resolution in this House to provide assistance for farmers; that is indicative of the criticisms I will make in terms of the lack of solutions in the approach we are taking.

I am supporting the resolution for the same basic reason as my colleague the member for Essex North (Mr. Hayes) did; it is an opportunity

for us to say clearly in this House that there is a problem in the agricultural community in Ontario, that there are serious problems for the independent family farmers in Ontario and that solutions have to be found if we want agriculture to survive in this province.

When he was speaking, the member for Haldimand-Norfolk (Mr. G. I. Miller) pointed out some of the major flaws in the present farm tax rebate program. People in this province who in no way can be described as farmers are getting the rebate; that has to be ended. The member mentioned Stelco and Dofasco; we could also talk about Imperial Oil and Shell Oil, which rent out land on tank farms for farming and get the 60 per cent tax rebate on that land.

In his resolution, the member has not dealt with a number of other resolutions that have already been passed by this House. I believe it was in 1979 that this House overwhelmingly passed a resolution that dealt with paying for the costs of education out of the property tax base. This resolution again is indicative of the failures of this Legislature.

The previous Conservative government failed to provide property tax reform in Ontario; it failed because it tried to reform the assessment system in isolation from the question of municipal finance. If you are going to reform property taxes in the province, you have to reform the whole municipal finance structure, including the financial relationship between the province and the municipalities. You cannot do one without doing the whole package or it will not work, and it has not. We have failed.

The present government is unfortunately following down the same road. It is currently spending millions and millions of dollars shipping assessors into Toronto to do the study, which it is hoped will convince Toronto and Metro to do a section 63 reassessment. We are spending millions and millions of dollars paying travel costs for assessors from Hamilton, St. Catharines, Kingston, Oshawa, Whitby, London, Cambridge, and God knows where else, to come to Toronto and stay in hotels and get paid for their meals while they are here, to provide a minuscule change in the property tax system in Metro Toronto that will not give fairness and equity in that system.

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The assessors brought in for the study are only the tip of the iceberg. The Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) announced only last week that the ministry probably will not be able to have the reassessment in Metro, if Metro decides to go ahead, in

place by 1988, as Metro was saying. It will probably take five years because, once the study is done and Metro decides it wants to proceed, the assessment division in the Ministry of Revenue is going to have to bring in hundreds of assessors from across the province for long periods of time while the total reassessment is done in Metro Toronto.

We will spend those millions upon millions of dollars for some small improvements to the fairness of people's property tax but still we will not, after all these expenditures, address the major problem. We have run away from the total question of municipal finance. I find the same problem with this resolution, although I am supporting it because it addresses the issue of the problem for farmers and because it will provide some additional assistance to farmers.

The member for Wellington-Dufferin-Peel (Mr. J.M. Johnson) mentioned in his comments that the former government had proposed at one point a property tax rebate system for farmers that would exempt all the farm land and all the farm buildings, so farmers would only pay property taxes on the house and a lot, roughly equivalent to a residential lot in their community of about an acre. In that case, and the member did not mention this, the government proceeded to spend tens of millions of dollars having assessors from across this province go out and make the calculations, the divisions and the measurements.

They did not do that to find out whether farmers were happy with the proposal. They did go out and consult farmers, but they spent all that money, those tens of millions of dollars, to find out how much it was going to cost the province for the transfer payments to the municipality. That is why they backed out, not because some farmers supported the proposal and some opposed it. Those of us who worked in the Ministry of Revenue got the memos, and we know what was said.

There are serious problems in the farm agricultural community in Ontario. The independent family farm is at risk. If we do not sit down and do what I have suggested we have to do with property tax reform, the family farm in Ontario will die and disappear, as is now being predicted in the act. Someone has to sit down and determine what the net bottom line is; someone has to determine what conditions have to exist for an independent family farm to be able to operate economically. I am not suggesting we have to set up a system that will protect the bad managers but we have to set the basic conditions under which a

good farmer can operate economically and make a living.

In some areas, the problem for farmers is the cost of land and, therefore, the cost of their mortgage payments; in other areas, there are other problems. We have to sit down and devise a package of programs with criteria. The same programs will not necessarily apply to every farmer, but they will give us the bottom line and will be related one to the other, so we can see their collective impact. When those programs click in, because certain conditions exist in certain counties in this province, the net result of the package of programs will create the condition of economic stability for the family farm.

There is no question that this issue was here when the previous government was the government, and it is still here now. The new government has thrown some additional programs at farmers, but the Minister of Agriculture and Food cannot stand in his place in this House and tell us the collective net impact of the new programs he has put in place. He could not even begin to tell us, because that analysis has never been done. Until that analysis is done and until we put together a package of programs that will create the economic condition in this province in which farmers can economically operate and make a decent living, then we will have failed to address the problems of agriculture and the independent family farm in Ontario.

Every month and every year, we will continue to debate the problems in agriculture in Ontario, the number of farms that are going out of business and the number of farmers whose loans are being called in because they cannot make payments and so on. It will not end until we are prepared to put together a comprehensive agricultural program in Ontario.

Mr. McGuigan: I want to address the reasons behind the rebate. If members will consider for a minute a house and lot on a country road, it may be a quarter-acre lot with a husband, wife and family living there who probably commute and work in town. What expenses, taxwise, does that family generate? The biggest one is education because about 60 per cent of their taxes go to pay for their children going to school. The remainder is for roads to provide access to town. There may be fire and police protection, matters of health and so on that are part of the county expenses. That is a house and a lot.

Across the road are a house and farm buildings on a 300-acre farm, which is the average farm in Ontario. What expenses does that farm generate? It is just about the same because the owners send

their kids to school and they need fire protection. It might be a little more for fire protection because they have a few more buildings. It might be a penny or two more for the roads because they have a transport truck to sell their milk, grain, livestock or whatever. There might be a little bit more, but it is a very small amount more that is required for that. They are very similar in generating the need for money.

Then we look at the taxes that are generated. They are both assessed at about the same rate, but the farmer has 300 acres of very valuable land in terms of real estate and he pays assessment on that land. At the bottom line, we end up with the farmer probably paying several multiples of the tax that the other chap and his family pay.

That is the basis for the previous government bringing back a tax rebate, but as the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Agriculture and Food, the member for Haldimand-Norfolk, mentioned, I think farmers themselves want to be fair about it. They want a system whereby they pay their proper share. I am not prepared to argue whether that is 60, 70 or 72 per cent. I am quite willing to support the amendment of the member for Northumberland (Mr. Sheppard).

I remind him that the previous government did bring in a plan offering 90 per cent at one point. That was roundly rejected by farmers. Perhaps in today's climate they will not reject it, but the feeling at that time was, "If someone is paying 90 per cent of my taxes, they somehow own my land." There is a perception out there that if one pays one's taxes, one owns the land. That is based on the fact that if one does not pay one's taxes, in three years' time the township or the county can take over the land. The assumption is that as long as one pays one's taxes, one owns the land. If one does not pay one's taxes, one does not own it. I point that out to members. The previous government really ran into a hotbed of opposition on that matter. I would like to leave that.

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On the matter of helping farmers, I specifically mention the point that was brought up by the member for Essex North, which was to ask this government to bring in supply management systems for agricultural commodities. I am sure it is no news to most members that the government of Ontario and the Minister of Agriculture and Food are quite prepared to bring in supply management for any product the farmer wants brought into a supply management program. We now have five products that are under supply management.

The law is in place in the Farm Products Marketing Act of Ontario and the agricultural agencies act in the federal government. Those two acts combined provide the means for our farmers to carry petitions, to vote and to have a product brought into a supply management system. It is open and it is available, and everyone knows that. It has been tested with a number of other agricultural commodities, the most notable one being beef. The beef producers have argued this for many years. They are arguing it again now. There is a small group, the Beef Producers for Change. It has about 700 members. It is very active and it wants to see a supply management system brought in, but it is faced with about 25,000 other beef producers who are not so convinced.

I know the member for Essex North means well when he suggests that we have supply management, but I do not think the member would want this government or any other government to force a supply management system on farmers and say to them: "You shall have a supply management system. We are going to bring in a czar of beef cattle, and you are going to be told how many beef cattle you can raise on your farm. If you raise any more than that, we are going to take severe, drastic action."

I do not know whether that action would be some sort of financial penalty that you charge the farmer for every extra animal the cows drop, or whether you charge the dairy people when they put their male animals into the beef stream or when they put their cows into the beef stream after they have lived out their milk-producing lives. I believe this was last voted on in 1983 and it failed to carry.

If beef producers among themselves go out and sign up 15 per cent of the producers in Ontario and present that petition to the government, the government has no course other than to hold a vote. Fifteen per cent triggers a vote. The vote would be held and it would be presented to the 25,000 beef producers. It would probably have to be presented to the dairy producers as well, because I do not see how you can be fair about it if you do not give them a vote. I am not sure how that works out in the industry, but you would probably be faced with presenting the vote to the dairy producers as well, and it would probably fail.

I have attended many meetings of beef producers, and they want the opportunity to sell those cattle across the US border at times when the US market is hot. Of course, everyone here knows that when you bring in a supply manage-

ment system, you automatically cut off your opportunity to export beef cattle to the US. You can go to meeting after meeting and people will stand up and say: "I want to run my own business. I want to determine the number of cattle I am going to grow and I want the opportunity, when it comes along, to sell them to the US market."

You have to remember that you have to sell this to the western beef producer too. Where is his nearest market? Because of the geography of this country, his nearest market is the United States. You have to sell it to producers in the Maritimes as well. Where is their nearest offshore market outside the province? It is the United States because of the geography of this country.

That opportunity exists for any farmer in Ontario and, as a matter of fact, for any farmer in Canada where the province has a farm products marketing act. It exists for any farmer to go for supply management. I am sure the Minister of Agriculture and Food would welcome situations where producers can prove in theory and later on in fact that supply management systems would be to their advantage. As the member for Kent-Elgin and an agricultural producer myself—I come from an agricultural county—I certainly support the opportunity for any farmer to apply to be in a supply management system.

Mr. Pollock: To wrap up, I appreciate the comments from all members of this House saying they are basically going to support the resolution.

To cover some of their comments, the member for Essex North mentioned that farm communities should be moving to supply management. I point out that a former minister of agriculture, William Stewart, did bring in supply management for the milk producers of this province. They are one of the biggest and largest lobbying groups in Ontario. This was brought about, as the member for Kent-Elgin (Mr. McGuigan) mentioned, with a vote of a majority of the producers who wanted a supply management program. Former Progressive Conservative governments have worked to bring in supply management.

I understand and agree with my colleague the member for Kent-Elgin that the legislation to bring in supply management has been on the books in this province ever since 1937 with a majority vote of those producers.

Mr. McGuigan: Brought in by a Liberal government.

Mr. Pollock: That could be; I do not know.

It was mentioned that Dofasco and Imperial Oil get this 60 per cent subsidy.

Mr. G. I. Miller: Stelco.

Mr. Pollock: Stelco and whatever. In one way, that may not be fair. On the other hand, they no doubt own land. That land is producing food, and all governments try to have a cheap food policy. That subsidy is helping to produce cheap food. It is not really helping the small family farm, but it is helping to supply food for a nation. However, is it any worse subsidising Imperial Oil and Dofasco than subsidizing somebody who is making \$40,000, \$50,000 or \$60,000 a year and lives in subsidized housing? I just throw those comments out to him. We do not live in a perfect world. Somebody who is making \$40,000 or \$50,000 a year and living in subsidized housing is no better than Dofasco or Imperial Oil.

The member for Haldimand-Norfolk mentioned horse farms. There might be some horse farms that make a profit, but I am sure that if one investigates that, one will find that a lot of those horse farms are hobby farms. They are basically employing a lot of people. They are write-offs—no question about that—but they are employing a lot of people. If they are not making a dollar themselves, then a subsidy for them is about as fair as in some other situations.

I think we have been around the horn quite a few times on the comments made about a farmer paying taxes on just a house and lot. In my first comments, I mentioned that if he pays taxes on just his house and lot, then if he lives in a predominantly rural community the mill rate on that house and lot will have to double to make up the taxes to run that municipality.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Morin): The member's time has expired. This ends the debate on ballot item 37.

1100

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

Mr. Stevenson moved resolution 74:

That, in the opinion of this House, the Minister of Agriculture and Food should undertake a thorough study of the concept of flexible production targets or production goals established by government in conjunction with producer groups. The minister should pressure the federal government to extend this study to the rest of Canada and the study should include an investigation of economic incentives through the stabilization program or other government programs to guarantee a high percentage of producer involvement. The study would concentrate first on production goals for field crops.

The Acting-Speaker: The honourable member has up to 20 minutes for his presentation and may reserve any portion of that for the windup.

Mr. Stevenson: I appreciate the opportunity to bring this resolution to the House. This resolution is worded to pertain primarily to Ontario. Because this is the Ontario Legislature, it is our responsibility to deal with policies relating to Ontario. However, I want to make clear that the thrust of my presentation goes far beyond the boundaries of Ontario and, indeed, beyond the boundaries of Canada. My presentation as well will differ somewhat from the resolution because, as I develop my ideas, I take a slightly different thrust, although it is certainly right along with the wording of the resolution.

If we are to design new agricultural policies, we must look at where we are today, where we have come from and into the near and more distant future. Today, in the food-producing countries of the world, we have overproduction in almost all major food and feed commodities. Importing countries, which can afford to buy agricultural commodities, are finding a clear buyer's market. This substantial overproduction has gradually accumulated during the past 15 years and has resulted from many factors. Significant technology developments and progressive, efficient, well-trained farmers are two important reasons. Also, government programs around the world have contributed extensively to overproduction.

Almost without exception, government programs in all major food-producing countries are production-linked or production-driven. The more a farmer produces, the more support he or she will get when government programs are triggered. The best example of how production-linked government programs lead to excessive production is the situation in the European Community. In the early post-war years, the countries of western Europe were net importers of most food and feed commodities. In the early 1960s, the EC decided it would become self-sufficient in all commodities that it could produce well. We cannot argue with that sort of approach. It began subsidizing at very significant levels the production of these commodities.

By the early 1970s, the European producers had filled their domestic needs but continued to produce and began exporting a significant amount of their commodities. Today, their producers now export from 20 per cent to 30 per cent of their total production into a glutted world market. Not only do they have massive production subsidies, but they also have export subsi-

dies. The European Community has sabotaged many of the markets other exporting nations originally had. Clearly, this is a production-based government program that is almost out of control. It is not a realistic option for the government of Canada or Ontario to pursue.

Canada, the United States and many other countries have had to deal not only with lost markets in Europe but also, more important in recent years, with the doubly subsidized exports coming into the world market, primarily from the European Community. The US finally had enough and in December 1985 the US Congress passed the Food Security Act, commonly known as the US farm bill in its present form. The Food Security Act delineated a new philosophy for the US and made three major thrusts to counteract the EC program.

One move, lowering the loan rate, effectively reduced the floor price for all world grains; thus grain producers around the world, who are not isolated from the real market as they are in Europe, have been dealt a major financial blow. The second is that the US now supports its own producers at a very high level regardless of what the actual market price is. The third is the new BICEP program to subsidize its own exports into the world market to compete with the EC. In fairness, to sign up with this program, farmers in the US did have to cut back their acreage by 15 per cent and in the coming year it could be as high as 35 per cent. At least they are trying to minimize their production.

Canadian governments have had to respond with some significant agricultural policy changes as well. The main component of that here in Ontario has been the \$1-billion special Canadian grains program that was announced recently for Canadian grain growers. Although we welcome that program, again the basic message behind it is to produce: the more you grow, the more help you get.

I believe it is now time that Ontario and Canada must start to look at our support programs and make them market-linked or market-based programs. Ontario and Canada must show the world that we are prepared to do our small share to bring world food and feed production into line with realistically available markets.

We must start taking a few pages from the book of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries. It is generally agreed that excessively high or excessively low oil prices are not good for the economies of most countries. Clearly, the same must be true for agricultural commodities.

There is a price range where exporting areas and producers selling commodities can get a fair price, and there is a price range where importing areas and consumers can buy at a fair price. The only way to get agricultural prices into an acceptable range for producing nations and producers is for the producing nations and producers to start taking responsibility for their production.

Canada clearly must take leadership to end the economic lunacy in world agricultural production. It is a battle that we cannot win. In my proposal, governments in Canada and producer groups would sit down annually to estimate the realistic market or production target, both domestic and export, that Canadian producers should expect to supply.

Each producer would be given an allotment based on historical production levels, and any government support—I am talking about support such as stabilization or the new Canadian special grains program—would be based only on the individual's allotment. If producers decided to produce in excess of that allotment, they would do it totally at their own risk, and there would clearly be no support for any production above that allotment.

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Producers would be allowed to alter the size of their operations. They would be allowed to get in and out of production. There would be no quotas as such and no quota values. This would be a very flexible system that would address both the immediate and long-term needs of our producers.

This concept is not totally new in Canada. To a significant extent, this production target and individual allotment system is currently in effect in the annual allotment of market share in industrial milk. In grains, which my resolution specifically mentions, much of the necessary structure is already in place. The western grain stabilization program and its delivery quota system, which is currently based on seeded acreage, could be easily altered to fit the proposed market-based production system.

In Ontario and eastern Canada, the grain production histories on individual farms are not as readily known or as sophisticatedly followed, but it does not seem to be a major challenge to put that kind of information in place. A few years ago, a study group working within the Ontario Pork Producers' Marketing Board and looking at policy and marketing options suggested that a system similar to the one I am proposing this morning would be one of the best alternatives for that industry to investigate seriously.

The market-based production system might require some land to be set aside. However, I believe that this requirement could be met with marginal agricultural lands. Property owners would be given incentives to plant hybrid poplar, pine or any other satisfactory species on such land. This would have obvious environmental and natural resource benefits.

This program would be funded with money already in stabilization programs as well as other ad hoc support programs, such as the recent \$1-billion special Canadian grains program. Additional funding would be required from provincial governments. The total amount of money would have to be sufficient to keep our support at least in the shadow of that of the European Community and the United States or our farmers will be annihilated under the current world situation.

It is not a question of whether we can afford it. We must keep our agricultural industry viable. The key difference here, though, would be that our producers would be producing to meet the actual markets and not producing to fill every storage in sight.

Economically, my proposal is an idea whose time has come. Politically, its time is coming. The idea will be particularly difficult to sell in western Canada today. Western Canadian producers clearly remember the unsuccessful Lower Inventories For Tomorrow program in the early 1970s. More important, there is no accumulation of grains in storage in the west. The 1985 crop was largely sold out. It is unlikely that producers will be so successful in selling the current crop. Barring major droughts, grain accumulation should be substantial in the west by 1987 or 1988. If the expected occurs, western grain producers will be much more receptive to market-based production programs at that time.

Currently in Ontario, several individuals and groups have expressed interest in this general type of program. I strongly suggest that the governments of Ontario and Canada immediately start investigating market-based production programs. This concept of production, if properly developed, could be put into place quickly. This system might prevent producers from drastic reaction to a difficult economic period or situation.

To summarize, the obvious advantages of the system I have proposed today are as follows: the system is very flexible to annual changes and market size, both domestically and internationally, the system is market-driven and the marketplace still has the controlling force.

The flexible structure would address both immediate and long-term needs of farmers. Support programs of a stabilization type would immediately respond to moderate and disastrous price downswings. We would not have the whole litany of support and ad hoc programs we have today, so many programs that most of our agricultural people in our ag offices can hardly keep them straight and farmers are totally confused. Producers would still be allowed to make individual decisions outside the allotment but would do so totally at their own risk. There would be no long-term quotas or quota values. Each producer group would decide independently whether it wished to develop such a program.

Canadian producers cannot win in the current agricultural trade war between the European Community and the US. Any leadership shown by Canada will increase our chances of success in ending the trade wars in the upcoming talks on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

Programs such as the property tax rebate and the Ontario family farm interest rate reduction programs would continue to function as they do today; only the delivery, and probably the nature, of the stabilization programs and current special programs would change under this structure. The benefit would probably reduce the likelihood of countervail actions on our commodities being taken by the US.

I urge the members of this Legislature to join with me today to urge the Ontario and Canadian governments immediately to begin studies on the development and operation of market-based or market-driven production systems for Ontario and Canada.

I will reserve the rest of my time for summary at the end.

The Deputy Speaker: That will be three minutes and 50 seconds.

Mr. Swart: I am pleased to rise to speak on this resolution, generally in support of it, because it deals with not only an area of our economy but also an area of our way of life that is in extremely serious trouble, an area that has not recovered at all yet and in fact is probably in a worse economic condition today than it has been at any time since the Depression, while other areas are improving somewhat.

I must immediately draw the attention of this House to the fact that the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr. Riddell) is again not in his seat. It is inexcusable when we are dealing with a topic that is so important to an area of the economy, the agricultural community, which is so depressed,

that the Minister of Agriculture and Food does not see fit to be in this Legislature.

Unlike other matters debated in this House, these debates are never surprises; we know a week or two weeks ahead that they are going to take place. It seems to me that for the Minister of Agriculture and Food not to be in this House on a day when agriculture is the subject of two resolutions is disgraceful, and I hope somebody will convey that to him.

The farmers in this province are suffering. They deserve the right to have the attention of the Minister of Agriculture and Food. When these issues are being debated in this House they deserve the right that he be here to take part, or if not only to listen.

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Mr. McGuigan: What did the member call farmers a few years ago?

Mr. Swart: I am not sure what the member is referring to, but I want to say that during my life I have never made any derogatory comments about the farmers in this province or any place else. I have no idea what the member is referring to.

I said I will support this resolution. I suspect it will get the general support of the House. It is a vague resolution. It comes to this House from a source which gives me some surprise for two reasons. First, the previous government was in power for 42 years and could have implemented those studies in this province and urged the federal government at that time to do the same thing, and it never did.

Second, it comes as a surprise because of the philosophy that party has always demonstrated. It wants to stay away from economic planning. Those are dirty words to the Conservatives. They want to stay away from matters of supply management unless it is almost forced on them. It is with some surprise that it comes from the previous Minister of Agriculture and Food.

I am also a bit surprised that, unless I missed something, the member did not give credit where credit was due about where this proposal originated. I have in front of me the October 1986 task force report commissioned by the Ontario Institute of Agrologists. Let me read the recommendations from that group under the section on meeting the objectives and production:

"1(a) The federal government define and publish a policy for the Canadian agricultural industry that sets targets for domestic requirements as well as export and import levels on a commodity basis at both the production and processing levels.

"1(b) The government of Canada identify production targets for regions of Canada on a regularly updated five and 10-year projection.

"1(c) Commodity groups and farm organizations give leadership in adopting production targets."

That is very similar to the resolution we have before us today. It is almost the same thing, and yet the member who introduced this resolution did not even bother giving credit to the Ontario Institute of Agrologists, which does a great deal of fine work in this province and which has made recommendations over the years.

Mr. McGuigan: It goes back further than that. It goes back to the NDP in BC. That is where the idea really came from.

Mr. Swart: It probably originated from the New Democratic Party. I would not take any objection to that.

As I say, OIA has made good recommendations with regard to agriculture over the years, perhaps almost more than any other group of that nature. It seems to me that credit should have been given to it when this resolution was introduced here in this House.

I want to point out, however, that it recognizes in this document that this is only a small part of the steps that need to be taken to correct the major problems that exist in agriculture in this province and in this nation. It also recommends and deals at length with such things as "methods to preserve the resource base, to attain self-sufficiency for Canada in products we produce efficiently, to improve Canada's balance of payments through exports and to enable capable farmers to continue in production through sufficient returns to labour, risk capital and management." These are alternatives that we also have to deal with in this province.

I am really concerned that there is little or no mention made of the lack of self-sufficiency that still exists in this province with regard to imports and exports of agricultural products. I quote from the 1985 Agricultural Statistics for Ontario, which indicate that we import into this province some \$2,974,000,000 worth of agricultural products and export only \$1.84 billion, a difference of \$1.1 billion between the agricultural products we import and the products we export.

All of us who know anything about agriculture know there are some products grown in warm climates which we cannot produce here. However, what bothers me is such things as oilseeds, for instance. We imported something like \$181 million worth of oilseeds and oilseed products

into this province and we exported only \$47 million worth of oilseeds.

Surely that is an area in which a caring government and a government that is prepared to intervene to help the farmers would move, so that we would have greater self-sufficiency and greater sales of oilseeds in this province. I concede that there has been a move in recent times to greater self-sufficiency in this field, but there is a long way to go yet and the government should be involving itself in that area.

There are also such things as nursery stock, poultry and eggs, where there is a tremendous deficiency between our exports and our imports, and this has not got any better in total over the past 10 years. It is a lot worse dollar-wise, but even percentage-wise there has been no improvement. A caring government would move to ensure that we have greater exports.

I know the battle that takes place in the international field in the matter of agricultural exports, but I suggest that with 500 million people in this world still hungry, if the Ontario government were really concerned about the exports of our farmers, it would be finding a way of getting those agricultural products to the needy nations of this world. I know it is difficult, but it can be done if we care enough not only for the farmers of this province but also for the hungry people throughout the world. There are ways of accomplishing it, and this government should take the leadership on that.

My colleague for Essex North (Mr. Hayes) dealt with the issue of greater financial assistance to farmers, as have the agrologists, in a resolution about a month ago showing that Ontario is doing much less. That is another area in which this government can improve its operations. It can at least get up to the level of the rest of the provinces in its level of financial assistance to farmers of this province.

This proposal goes part-way on the right route, and I will support it.

Mr. McGuigan: As I mentioned in one of my interjections, this program is not new. It is simply a rejigging of the many programs that thinkers all over the world have tried to bring in to solve the problem. I first heard it advocated in a program in British Columbia a number of years ago.

This government and this member do not support the resolution. Here we are on the battlefield of free trade, already joined by the federal government, in answer to the entreaties of the President of the United States. We have danced the jig in Ottawa with them and now we

are dancing at the end of the string because of those entreaties. Before the battle was joined, we gave up on drug prices, and we gave up voluntarily the battle on softwood lumber. We did not have the guts to stick with it and fight it through to the International Trade Court in Washington.

We find ourselves being drawn in on the auto pact, the jewel of Ontario's and Canada's manufacturing industry. It was passed in 1965 by a Liberal government. It has brought unprecedented advantages in employment in this country. Now we find it is on the table. These are things we were assured in the beginning were not on the table.

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If we adopt this resolution, we will be laying on the table the agricultural system of Canada. We will be voluntarily pulling out of this race before the battle is even joined. It is wrong to give up voluntarily. I know the member's motives are fine. He is trying to find a way out of the dilemma in which the world finds itself, brought about, as he says, by good motives that followed the Second World War when Europe decided it was going to feed itself, followed by not so good motives in the United States.

They brought in a system that is not market-driven, as the member has talked about; it is driven by the greed of legislators in the United States, many of whom are big farmers themselves. They set up a system whereby the US government was used to boost all kinds of money into the agricultural industry and into the pockets of only 18 per cent of US farmers.

Studies have been done in the US showing that of those people who require money to maintain their family farms, only 18 per cent get any money. The thing is tied to big acreages and big operations. In 1981, the amount of money the US government put into that program was only \$4 billion. In 1986, the figure is estimated to be anywhere between \$25 billion and \$30 billion. No one really knows.

How did that system work? It said to the farmer, "If you reduce your acreage, we will give you certain incentive payments towards your crops." Last year it was 20 per cent on corn, as the member mentioned. What does the farmer do in that situation? He puts more energy and input into the remaining 80 per cent and comes up with even larger crops. There is enough corn and grain in storage right now in the US for 90 per cent of next year's requirements. They only need to grow 10 per cent of their last year's crop to fill not only their own demand but also export demand.

That system has not worked. It is not market-driven; it is driven by greed and ignorance. They think the farmer is some stupid lout. However, the farmers in the US, as everywhere, are smart. They have had a recent program to pay them to take a million dairy cows out of production because there are such mountains of dairy products in storage. What did the farmer do with the money? He shipped his old cows to market, pocketed the extra money that was given by the government and put that money into new, younger animals and new facilities. It did not make a dent in the oversupply of dairy products.

Mr. Stevenson: Those programs have absolutely nothing to do with what I have said here.

Mr. McGuigan: They have everything to do with the system of going in and bargaining about our situation in free trade. If we, as the smaller producer in this battle, voluntarily say to the United States that we are going to opt out of it, then we are going to drop our farm production by 50 per cent.

Mr. Stevenson: We are producing for every market we can realistically attain. We are not pulling out of any race. What you are saying is absolute nonsense.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The member will have time to reply.

Mr. McGuigan: It is absolute truth, what I am saying, because if the member opposite is talking about raising prices, is that not what this is all about—getting more money to the farmer through a market system? Therefore, you have to raise the prices. When you raise those prices, you take us out of the world market, because the world market is at a depressed price.

I have spent all my life in farm marketing; I know something about it. The fuzzy-headed thinking this resolution presents and the fuzzy-headed thinking behind it are not part of the real world. If you are going to raise prices in Canada, you have to cut off a full 50 per cent of our agricultural production, because that is the amount of our production that goes into the world market.

Mr. Stevenson: You have missed the whole concept of my presentation.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr. McGuigan: The whole concept of the member's presentation will take us into very serious situations in this world battle. This government on this side of the House and this Premier (Mr. Peterson) are standing up for the people of Ontario, the farmers of Ontario and the workers of Ontario as best we can against the

fuzzy-headed thinking that exists in Ottawa. The member's program fits right in with it. We have to look at the realities of that marketplace.

The Ontario government has entered with the federal government into a program to devise a market strategy to try to work out some of these problems. We have those same problems within Canada, because if you curtail grain production in Ontario and if the main grain you have to curtail to get that price up is corn, immediately you are flooded with western barley. You are flooded with it in a system where the government actually pays the railroads to bring it down here almost free. You are then immediately up against the task of trying to resolve the differences with those western people, as the member for Durham-York (Mr. Stevenson) said himself.

We have entered a program with the federal government to try to work out a strategy.

Again, to focus on corn, if you are going to allot some sort of acreage that is going to be the better-priced acreage for the Ontario farmer, a certain percentage of his present growth of corn, you have to put that at a price way above \$3 a bushel. You have to look at \$4 a bushel, even \$4.50 to \$5 a bushel on the part that is market-oriented. Then the member says he is going to let the farmer grow the balance of his crop on the free market.

The minute you step in and put a high price on part of the allotment that the member speaks of, you immediately raise all sorts of problems with the United States. Just think what they would do to our hogs when they factored that in through the countervail process, because corn goes into hogs and hogs go to the US. Thirty per cent of our hog production goes to the US.

Mr. Sheppard: It is with pleasure that I rise today to say a few words on the resolution brought forth by the member for Durham-York.

The resolution proposes that the Minister of Agriculture and Food should undertake a complete study of the concept of flexible production goals established by government in conjunction with producer groups.

I want to take a moment to congratulate the member for Durham-York for proposing this resolution. I believe it is a good resolution. It makes common sense and it could prove to be the long-term solution to our agricultural problems.

Agriculture is one of the most highly subsidized industries in the country and perhaps in the world, yet the industry is facing a financial crisis that has caused more changes in the past three years than we have seen in a long while.

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Federal government subsidies are already very large. They totalled nearly \$6 billion in 1986, approximately one third of the total farm revenues. Even this substantial aid, however, is only a temporary solution to a problem that will not resolve itself in time.

Today we are faced with an incredible amount of surplus food. There is a glut of grain on world markets, cheese and beef in storage around the world and enough surplus butter in Europe to supply Ontario for 15 years.

We can attribute these problems to several factors: (1) technology; farmers are able to grow more with less manual effort thanks to machinery available today; (2) aggressive farmers; and (3) government policy. In the 1970s, when many countries such as the US and Europe decided to become self-sufficient, farmers were encouraged to grow as much as possible. Furthermore, farmers were paid extremely inflated prices for their production through subsidized programs at the taxpayers' expense.

Although the European Community and the US were the prime offenders, Canada now produces twice as much food as it can possibly use domestically. Also, countries such as China, India and Pakistan are now exporting food.

The public spending is so large—about \$25 billion in the US and about \$45 billion in the European Community—that it has knocked the bottom out of the world food market. As a result, we are faced with the inevitable. World markets have collapsed and we in Canada are facing a financial crisis because our farmers depend on market prices.

Yet, knowing these facts, farmers in the US, the European Community and even Canada to a lesser extent continue to produce far more food than the world can eat. This overproduction has distorted world markets. Basically, what it boils down to is that the country willing to subsidize prices to the lowest level becomes the winner, and the loser becomes the taxpayer, because in the European Community and the US the cost of the trade war has been shouldered by the general taxpayer. In Canada, however, the burden has been absorbed by the farmers. This has been reflected in bankruptcies, foreclosures and a steady decline in the price of farm land.

The federal government has tried to insulate Canadian farmers by paying them higher subsidies, such as the recent \$1-billion, no-strings-attached cash payout, but there is no way for us to compete with \$25-billion and \$45-billion figures.

One of the obvious misfortunes of the agricultural policies in Europe and the US is that they do very little for future generations of farmers. We in Canada must guard against that.

One of the long-term solutions is for countries to stop their massive subsidization of the agricultural industry. In other words, let the marketplace settle itself. Canadian farmers could likely compete on the export market if all subsidies were discontinued, but they would be limited to certain crops under certain conditions. For example, the Canadian farm industry could probably compete in wheat, feed grains, pork, some beef and vegetables. On the other hand, we could not expect to sell milk, chickens and eggs on the export market.

This so-called solution, however, would cause much suffering to Canadian farmers. There would certainly be a readjustment in the farming sector; land prices would go down and some farmers would disappear, as we are already beginning to see.

We in Ontario and in Canada must provide leadership, domestically and worldwide, in order to regulate supply and demand for the benefit of all.

We must devise some sort of flexible supply management system, preferably without the severe controls of management boards, as this resolution proposes. Supply management could replace traditional market forces with controlled production in order to match supply with demand. A formula that would allow efficient farmers a reasonable return could be used to guide pricing at the production level. Retail prices could be based on the demand in the marketplace.

Consumers would gain from supply management because they would always be assured of a ready supply of fresh products. Producers would also benefit from a guaranteed market for their crops. This would allow farmers to better plan their cash flow and expenditures, which is a very important factor in the farming industry.

It is one thing to have supply management; the difficult part is making it work. Pricing decisions would be based on the cost of the most efficient producers, so farmers would constantly have to improve their operations to remain profitable. Supply management would require having the discipline to match supply with demand and to make it stick without exceptions.

In 1975, for example, Canadian industrial milk production was much greater than demand. Milk production had to be cut to avoid a costly surplus. It was a hard pill to swallow, but

Canadian farmers reduced their milk quota by 18 per cent. As a result, we have a healthy dairy sector that balances production and domestic requirements.

Supply management is not an easy marketing system by any means. In Ontario, however, the system has worked for the milk industry despite the seasonal changes in consumption. Since 1965, dairy farmers have been able to invest and improve their efficiency, knowing they could rely on a stable market for their products.

I see this resolution as a viable, long-term solution to the crisis our agricultural sector is faced with at present. I urge every member to vote in favour of this resolution if he is genuinely concerned about our farmers.

Mr. Hayes: Unlike the member for Kent-Elgin (Mr. McGuigan), who appears to be afraid of change, of taking chances and of taking the initiative to improve the agricultural industry, even if it is tough I have to support it and support this resolution. It is a step in the right direction in meeting the needs of farmers in Ontario and Canada.

This is a resolution that affects not only Ontario farmers but also Canadian farmers. We have to work and co-operate with the other provinces towards a goal of a national agricultural strategy for Canada. The current food policy practised by the policymakers of this country and this province, which results in cheap food at the farm gate, has generated the present instability in farm production and uncertainty among farmers as to their future.

Over the years, Canadian consumers have been provided with cheap food at the expense of the bankruptcy and disillusionment of thousands of farmers each year. Another reason for the low prices farmers are getting is oversupply. Part of our oversupply is caused by farmers producing more in response to lower prices. While this would seem to be the wrong response according to supply-demand economics, it is a natural response of a farmer whose total assets are in land and equipment that can be used only to produce food. The farmer has thought, "I can double my income by producing twice as much." Everybody thinks like this and prices are further depressed.

We must stress to the federal government that projected food production targets will only be attained if farmers are rewarded by farm prices through marketing mechanisms that will return full farm costs of production, including adequate returns on investment, management and labour. Failure to reach this objective has resulted in

many family farm units being forced to supplement farm income with off-farm employment, or alternatively, getting out of farming by selling or going through bankruptcy.

This resolution states, "That, in the opinion of the House, the Minister of Agriculture and Food should undertake a thorough study of the concept of flexible production targets or production goals established by government in conjunction with producer groups." It is a resolution that suggests a form of orderly marketing, supply management or whatever title one wants to put on it. For this resolution to be effective, the marketing system must include supply management to prevent excessive inventory buildup while ensuring adequate supply to meet domestic needs as well as export opportunities.

Much of the present confusion on the subject of farm production and marketing in this country stems from the contradictions between federal policies and programs and those of the various provincial governments. That is why Ontario should take the initiative in working towards a national agricultural strategy for Canada by pressuring the federal government to work with Ontario and the other provinces to reach this goal.

I stand in favour of this resolution, and I hope it gets unanimous support.

1150

Mr. G. I. Miller: It is a pleasure for me to rise and to speak on the resolution. My colleague the member for Kent-Elgin has indicated we will not support the resolution.

It is not that this government is not progressive in its thinking. The member for Welland-Thorold (Mr. Swart) took some unfair shots at the Minister of Agriculture and Food this morning when he asked why he is not in the House. As the parliamentary assistant to the minister, I am here and listening closely to any new ideas and suggestions that will assist the agricultural industry. We feel strongly that we can and should improve the farmer's lot in the Ontario and in the Canadian economy.

The resolution is predominantly a federal responsibility. We are playing a role in assisting in the marketing of some of our products. We have taken that step in the past few months by setting up a committee to look into marketing, under the leadership of Art Loughton, a former director of the horticulture experiment station at Simcoe. The committee is working with industry and trying to find new markets and new products we can grow in Ontario.

On December 11, 1986, I brought in a resolution that "in the opinion of this House, the Ontario government should] further encourage the use of Canadian-grown and Canadian-processed food products by all ministries, government agencies and provincially funded institutions."

We have a deficit of \$2 billion in our agricultural industry in Ontario. As the member for Welland-Thorold pointed out this morning, there are a lot of fresh fruits we cannot grow here. We are not trying to get at that issue. We are trying to make sure that we produce the food we are producing and have some exports. Our corn production is only a fraction more than our needs. Our production of soybeans and oil-producing products is too small to meet our needs. I believe Ontario is served well by our marketing agencies such as our milk boards and our chicken boards, where there is controlled production.

When we look at the overall statistics, while we are having a lot of farm bankruptcies, we have fewer than in other provinces of Canada where the regulations are not as well organized. I agree we have to get the cost of production for the products we grow. There is no doubt about that. Particularly in the grain industry, the price received is below the cost of production. Corn that is selling for \$80 a tonne is selling at Depression prices. Some areas of our agriculture are in a better and stronger position.

We will be listening. The group of farmers or agrologists who made the recommendations on which this resolution was based are certainly working in the best interests of agriculture in Canada. We will be researching and working along with that group and with all groups who represent the agricultural industry in Canada to strengthen the industry in Ontario. I am sure the ministry and the minister are listening and will be trying to improve the lot of farmers as we go down the road, so that agriculture can be strong.

Mr. Speaker: The member for Durham-York has reserved three and a half minutes.

Mr. Stevenson: I appreciate the support of those members next door here and I appreciate the comments they have made.

I specifically draw attention to the comments of the member for Welland-Thorold. It is true that I did not mention the Ontario Institute of Agrologists in my comments. Some of the ideas in here were contained in its report, but certainly people such as George McLaughlin, Gordon Bowman, Richard Pike, the Ontario Corn Producers' Association, many different individ-

uals and groups over the past few years have suggested systems generally of the type suggested here this morning in this motion. Since the concept has been talked about for some time—and as I said earlier, it is not totally new; in fact, there are precedents already in Canada where this system is working—I did not attempt to go through the whole list of people and organizations that have had input into this general line of thought and this type of system.

He did mention that self-sufficiency had been omitted from my presentation. Although I suppose I did not actually say the words, I think it is clear that I was talking about governments and producer groups looking at all markets that are realistically available to us, and that includes domestic and export markets. If there is any portion of the domestic market that we are not realistically filling, I am sure producer groups would recognize that and urge that production be increased to meet that demand. Certainly the situation now with the growing market in the chicken industry and so on would be an example of how production is adjusted, but I think this system would be much quicker to react to alterations in the markets than we see sometimes in the complete supply management marketing board system.

The member for Kent-Elgin stated that we were pulling out of the race and voluntarily giving up. I am not sure how he got that idea from my presentation. It certainly is not at all in my thoughts, and I am sorry he got that idea from the wording of my presentation. I must go back and carefully reread it and see whether there are areas where it implies that. Certainly that was not my intent.

The prices of food and feed commodities will not increase until all producing nations agree, as the oil producers have at least temporarily agreed, to see the price of their commodity go up somewhat. Until that happens among all producing nations, Canada can basically do nothing.

FARM TAX REDUCTION PROGRAM

Mr. Speaker: Mr. Pollock has moved resolution 73.

Motion agreed to.

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

Mr. Speaker: Mr. Stevenson has moved resolution 74.

Motion agreed to.

The House recessed at 11:59 a.m.

AFTERNOON SITTING

The House resumed at 1:30 p.m.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

DAY CARE

Mr. Eves: For some time now, there has been a demand for improved child care services in my riding. During my time as MPP for Parry Sound, progress has been made. We now have excellent day care facilities in west Parry Sound and Mattawa as a result of the co-operative and dedicated efforts of local officials, individuals and community groups.

We have been working towards the same goal in east Parry Sound. I am pleased to report our efforts are ready to bear fruit. A needs study has been completed, the district social services board has conducted a property acquisition review and we have demonstrated a clear and immediate need for action.

In the light of these facts, I urge the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney) to act now to establish a child care centre in east Parry Sound. I further ask that the minister ensure this centre meets the needs of area residents by providing the flexibility to serve those on shift work as well as those with nine-to-five jobs. That kind of flexibility in day care arrangements is vital to many Ontario communities, and nowhere is it more in demand than in our riding.

I look forward to the minister taking immediate action to address the clear child care needs in Parry Sound riding.

SOLICITOR GENERAL'S REMARK

Mr. McClellan: I wish to read excerpts from a letter sent today from the member for York South (Mr. Rae) to the Premier (Mr. Peterson) about the Solicitor General (Mr. Keyes). The letter reads:

"Ken Keyes' responsibilities include management of the police and Ontario's correctional institutions. As such, he sets the standard for the conduct of thousands of officials who must be especially sensitive to a multiracial Ontario. What happened yesterday—the slur as well as the difficulty in getting Mr. Keyes to realize the offensiveness of his unthinkable remark—reveal judgement so questionable that his position in cabinet is no longer tenable, coming as this does only shortly after Mr. Keyes' previous failure in judgement....

"The hard reality is that the standard of conduct for ministers is different. They are representing government and the people of Ontario. He represents especially sensitive portfolios.

"The question for all of us is not whether or not we make mistakes—we all do. The question is how we respond to them and whether we learn from them. No one has tenure in the cabinet and none of us has a monopoly on virtue. Surely it's fair to say that membership in a cabinet is something that is earned every day. Trust must be continually renewed.

"I know how difficult and unpleasant these choices are. I hope you will understand the spirit in which this is written, and that I take no partisan joy in any of this.

"Yours sincerely, Bob Rae, Leader, Ontario New Democrats."

RECOGNITION OF SENIOR CITIZEN

Mr. Offer: I am pleased to rise to inform the Legislature of the recipient of the city of Mississauga Senior Citizen of the Year Award. This award is jointly sponsored by the Mississauga parks and recreation department and the Port Credit Rotary Club. The recipient of this year's award is Elsie Edwards, who has been characterized by many as utterly reliable and always having the seniors' welfare at heart.

For more than a decade, Elsie Edwards has been, among other things, a key member of the Park Royal Seniors' Advisory Council, an active participant in the Lorne Park Seniors Club, a member of the Clarkson Friendship Centre and a regular patron of St. Bride's Church.

The seniors of this province are a vibrant, enthusiastic and energetic group of individuals, people who have, in no small part, shaped the communities in which we live today. They are responsible for having contributed so much to this province. The activities of someone such as Elsie Edwards, 75 years of age, are characteristic of so many seniors across this province.

I would like formally to acknowledge and congratulate Elsie Edwards on her award and for her contribution, not only to the city of Mississauga but also to Ontario.

SOLICITOR GENERAL'S REMARK

Ms. Fish: I rise today today to associate myself and my colleagues with the remarks contained in the letter that was recently read to

this chamber by the member for Bellwoods (Mr. McClellan).

Questions of racial intolerance, racial slurs and the basic and fundamental issue of an absolute conviction to a multiracial society in Ontario and Canada are not questions of partisan politics; they are questions of the clear leadership and fundamental base upon which society is built. I am therefore pleased to indicate our support for the position taken by the leader of the third party.

SCHOOL BOARDS

Mr. Allen: I am delighted the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway) is in the chamber with us today. I want to refer to some problems in native representation on school boards. He will be quite aware that we have in recent months passed legislation that bears on the representation of other groups, namely, the francophone community, with respect to the governance of French schools.

He will also be more aware than I am that there is a study process under way at present which is re-examining the whole question of school board representation, its basis and equity across the province.

While the regulations at this time allow native representation on school boards, and while those regulations are in force and the representations are properly in place across the province for the most part, there are one or two places where there is a question of whether the proportion of students and the proportion in the local population do not warrant substantially more presence for native people on the boards which exercise control over the education of their children.

I think, for example, of the Manitoulin Board of Education where there are 328 of 1,014 students who are native Indian and 260 out of some 725 in the secondary school alone.

The population in the area is one-third native Indian, and the minister might want to consider, in the course of re-examining this whole question, the appropriateness of special consideration for the Manitoulin board.

DRIVER EXAMINATIONS

Mr. Sheppard: I was recently informed that, effective April 1, 1987, driver examination service to the village of Brighton and area will be discontinued. In turn, anyone wishing to be tested will have to travel to either Trenton in the Kingston district or to Cobourg, Port Hope and Campbellford in the Port Hope district.

Since this announcement was made, I have also learned from the driver examination office in Campbellford that at the end of March services to that town will be cut from one day per week to one day every two weeks. Complaints have already started to pour into my office and to the examination offices. This reduction in services from Campbellford and the elimination of services in Brighton will prove highly inconvenient to everyone, especially seniors, students, firemen, and school bus and truck drivers who have had to wait up to six weeks for an appointment to be tested.

I strongly urge the Minister of Transportation and Communications (Mr. Fulton) to reconsider the reduction of services to the Campbellford travel point office as well as the closure of the Brighton travel point office.

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

Mr. Warner: The Minister of Skills Development (Mr. Sorbara) yesterday had a very complacent response to the Dryden report. Quite astonishingly, he suggested that if I took a look at the Futures program, I would be impressed by the statistics.

He should recall instead that Mr. Dryden said "only a small percentage of unemployed youth can be accommodated in youth programs." And that in the Futures program, on average, the number of young people in the program at any one time is approximately 12,500. He ventures a personal speculation that, "many, probably most, jobs filled as a result of job creation programs would have been filled had the programs not existed."

Further, "When youth unemployment rates go down, but slowly, these programs get judged not for what they are, but what they are understood to be. And they fail, because they must. They do not and cannot deliver what is expected of them. And when they do fail, concrete and visible, they come to stand also for all that a government is not doing about youth unemployment."

Again, "...this means the current job creation programs directed to the private sector will have little impact on the current youth unemployment rate."

In other words, Mr. Dryden has clearly identified the problem and this minister remains complacent as he does little or nothing.

1340

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTRY

CREDIT CARD

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I have a statement in response to the question from the member for

Nipissing (Mr. Harris) yesterday concerning the selection of the American Express credit card. The member does not have a copy? It is coming right now.

Selecting a corporate card to pay for government employee travel expenses is being introduced to save an estimated \$3 million a year; so the concept of using a credit card is extremely useful.

Before requesting proposals, a range of evaluation criteria was established, against which the submissions were measured. I am tabling these criteria today, together with the request for proposals.

The technical bids were submitted with the request by bidders that we observe confidentiality. This has been further reinforced this morning by a request from one of the losing bidders. Therefore, the information tabled listing the bids identifies only the winner specifically. The numbers are all there.

Of the bids submitted by the six Canadian companies, the proposal developed by American Express Canada Inc. was the low bid, tied by one other competitor. American Express was selected on the basis of better meeting the universality and other criteria. The other competitors ranged upwards to as much as \$240,000 more per year.

American Express Canada Inc. is an Ontario corporation and the company has operated in Ontario since 1853. With 1,900 employees, virtually all Canadian, mostly resident in Markham in the constituency of York Centre, American Express has an enviable record of good corporate citizenship in Canada. The card does not indicate it is an American company; rather, it prefers to view itself as international with operations in more than 100 countries based on the same local organization as we enjoy here in Ontario.

RESPONSE

CREDIT CARD

Mr. Harris: Are there no more statements, to give me time to read this?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I am sorry it was not in the member's hands earlier.

Mr. Harris: So am I, because obviously it has been available although, contrary to when I first raised it, the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) did not comment on his answer to the first question, which indicated these were internal documents. However, between the first and the second, somebody must have nudged him and realized this is public information and should be readily available.

I have not had time to analyse all of the data the Treasurer has tabled here today, although I find it passing strange on a number of things. There is no mention in this statement today that this was tendered. When the Ministry of Government Services was talking about centralizing its travel arrangements, as we have read and heard about today, there seemed to be some great secrecy surrounding what went on when the bids actually came in and what happened after that, but at least the acting Minister of Government Services (Mr. Conway) put out a tender call, advertised and invited everybody who might be able to provide travel services to tender.

I find it passing strange that the Treasurer, when he was looking at credit card services, did not tender. There was a very selective proposal call. In other words, some were invited to submit proposals. Many Canadian trust companies were not invited to submit proposals. Many other credit card companies were not invited to submit proposals and had absolutely no opportunity to enter into this contest with the very select ones that were invited to submit proposals. Some might say it was almost a very secretive way of inviting people to make money off the Ontario government.

I add that I have not had a lot of time to look through the request-for-proposal questionnaire that was given relatively secretly to selective card companies in Ontario. However, I can tell the Treasurer that in the past 24 hours I have had some comments from others involved in this industry throughout Ontario that indicate that, in their opinion, this corporate credit card request-for-proposal questionnaire was very slanted and biased in favour of American Express before the process even started. It is not my accusation; it is an accusation made by others in the credit card business, whose names I will be glad to furnish when the appropriate time comes.

There is something rotten in the way this was done. The Treasurer talks about saving \$3 million as a justification. There would be the \$3-million justification no matter what credit card company was selected. I do not have a breakdown; I asked for that and I have not seen it submitted. However, I assume the \$3-million saving is on the basis of the amount of interest that does not have to be given in cash advances to employees, the other method that was being used by the Ontario government.

It all sounds grandiose. I look forward to examining the information on the bids that was supplied to me. I would appreciate receiving from the Treasurer information on this \$3-

million saving and finding out whether all the alternatives were supplied or whether somebody intentionally went out and said, "We should give all this business to American Express," drafted a proposal that made it very attractive that this be the company and did not look at the other alternatives for saving money and not look closely at many Canadian credit card companies that were excluded from this process.

VISITOR

Mr. Hennessy: Point of privilege.

Mr. Speaker: Point of privilege?

Mr. Hennessy: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I take this opportunity of recognizing the presence of the mayor of the city of Thunder Bay, Jack Masters, in the gallery.

Mr. Speaker: That is not a point of privilege. The Minister of Education on a point of—

Hon. Mr. Conway: May I say parenthetically, but it is a point of view that members on this side share with the member for Fort William (Mr. Hennessy).

MEMBER'S ANNIVERSARY

Hon. Mr. Conway: I request unanimous consent so that we might observe a certain anniversary this afternoon.

Mr. Speaker: Is there unanimous consent to observe a certain anniversary?

Agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Conway: I appreciate the co-operation of the members.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Is this going to be lengthy?

Hon. Mr. Conway: I promise my colleague the member for Brant-Oxford-Norfolk (Mr. Nixon) that on my part it will not be a lengthy oration, but I do want to take this opportunity. I know all members of the House would want me to note that later this week, actually on Sunday, the province will celebrate the 25th anniversary of the election to this Legislature of our good friend and colleague the member for Brant-Oxford-Norfolk.

January 1962; I remember it well.

Mr. Barlow: You fell out of your cradle.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: His pants were wet.

Hon. Mr. Conway: I do, because it was in that winter that the province saw five by-elections take place in the early part of the Premiership of John P. Robarts. One of those by-elections was in my own county, where a cousin of mine representing the Liberal Party was elected to the House on that occasion. He was to

lose 18 months later to another relative-in-law, so to speak, the current member for Renfrew South (Mr. Yakabuski).

1350

Our colleague has, over the past 25 years, brought a great deal of colour, character and commitment to this assembly. He represents, of course, a very important tradition in Ontario politics, a tradition that I know is well recognized by those who appreciate the history of this province.

In the old days, my colleague the then member for Brant used to say on many a platform, "It is time for a change." We are delighted on this side that some 19 months ago a change finally and happily occurred in this great province.

Mr. Rae: That is a matter of opinion.

Hon. Mr. Conway: We note the opinions of the leader of the third party. We appreciate the opinions of the leader of the third party.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: We appreciate the leader of the third party.

Hon. Mr. Conway: And as the member for Brant-Oxford-Norfolk says, we appreciate the leader of the third party.

However, it was in the fall of 1919, some 67 years ago, that the father of the current Treasurer entered this assembly as the member for North Brant and as Provincial Secretary in the United Farmers government at that time. During the 20th century, the Nixons have played a very important and constructive role in the public life of this province.

It is a tradition of father and son that is shared by others in this assembly. I know my friend the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Grossman) would want me to note that he carries on the very distinguished tradition begun by his father some 32 years ago. We had Harry and Bud Price, Conservatives from Toronto. We had Norm and Michael Davison from the Hamilton area representing the New Democratic Party, father and son. In fact, in my area we had the great Conservative family the Dunlops, father, son and grandson, who all served in this assembly.

It is interesting when one looks back to January 1962 to see what the current leader of the House, the then candidate for the Liberal Party, was about. He was described about that time by a certain Val Sears as a gangly, six-foot-three, 195-pounder. Some things have changed.

Mr. Wildman: Obviously, there have been some changes.

Hon. Mr. Conway: The photographs from the brochure of 1962 indicate that other things

have changed a bit. The commitment and the language have in many ways not changed. I was struck, and I know you would appreciate this, Mr. Speaker, that in that first campaign the candidate for the Liberal Party in Brant was saying, "The farmer does not want to be pampered or mollycoddled, but he wants a right to expect a firm and consistent hand in the establishment and implementation of sensible farm policies."

The member has gone on over many years to give practical, positive and powerful effect to that commitment. I want to say, and the Premier (Mr. Peterson) would want me to say, that those of us who were recruited when our friend the member for Brant-Oxford-Norfolk was the leader of the party feel a particular pleasure on this occasion.

I will not remind my colleague the member for Brant-Oxford-Norfolk what it was he sent via emissary to Pembroke when he heard that some juvenile delinquent was actually seeking the Liberal nomination in 1975. More seriously, I can say, on behalf of all of us who were recruited in 1975, and certainly before, because I know you, Mr. Speaker, came to the standard and the banner when the member for Brant-Oxford-Norfolk was the leader of this party, we have always felt a special relationship to this most remarkable Canadian. Yes, he is irrepressible. There are times when he is positively impossible.

Mr. Laughren: Obnoxious, even.

Hon. Mr. Conway: No. I certainly would not say that.

I noticed in the morning press the observation that he was the general plough-horse of the current government, and that is true. One of those articles observed that the farmer from Brant county was "more sophisticated than you'd expect, and there's less ego." That is the truth. One of the things you discover about the farmer from Brant-Oxford-Norfolk when you are privileged to work with him is that he is a very interesting, multifaceted personality.

On behalf of all the Liberal caucus and on behalf of all Liberals in this province, whom he has led both as president and as leader of the party, I want to say that we greatly appreciate the dedication he has shown and the encouragement he has extended to all of us.

I want to say in conclusion, on behalf of the Premier and the government, that we look forward to many long years of continued service. General plough-horses cannot be easily or soon retired, and we expect that we celebrate this week the first 25 years. There is a tradition that

suggests there will be many more, and we wish him well at Treasury, in the bakery, in the bookshop and in all those other wonderful places we know this remarkable individual inhabits.

Mr. Grossman: I want to add some remarks on behalf of our party on this great occasion and unlike the minister, who promised to be brief—we appreciate that it was brief under his definition; we would have missed question period had it been his usual length—I want briefly to add our thoughts on this day.

As the minister has pointed out, it is in my case with a special sense of collegiality that I have an opportunity to do this. My father and I have served in this House for 32 years now, but that seems to pale against the Nixon dynasty of 68 years. Some would have thought that 42 years was a long time. It could be a great campaign slogan in Brant: "Forty-two years is enough."

However, in the years that the current Treasurer has served here, he has shared many offices that I have had the opportunity to have: the Treasury, obviously, government House leader, opposition House leader, Leader of the Opposition. He has had the opportunity to lead his party as the third party in the House. That is something I do not aspire to do. I rather aspire to one of the offices that his own father held, which was Premier of Ontario, but I did have in mind more than 90 or so days when I get the chance.

I have many fond memories, and still collect them, of the time the member for Brant-Oxford-Norfolk has spent in the House, and not only the days when he enlivened this House with suggestions and comments, which some of us have remembered but which the Treasurer does not always remember; he sat on these benches making marvellous suggestions, mostly in a very good-natured way.

1400

Hard as it is to believe that attendance would lag in the House, particularly on things such as budget debates and even on windup speeches, somehow attendance sometimes would lag. I always remember, when we sat on the government side, we always found more of our members than usual here when we knew the wrapup speaker was the member for Brant-Oxford-Norfolk.

I should not say this when it will so bruise the ego of the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway), but when the wrapup speech was made by the member for Brant-Oxford-Norfolk, our members tended to come in larger numbers, because his speeches were always informative and entertaining and mostly fair. During the long

time the member not only served in this House but also came to the House, he showed all of us that there was a lot to be learned, at least in earlier days, from sitting in the House and listening to what was happening.

Among my fondest remembrances is the testimonial dinner given for my father when he retired in 1975. The then leader of the Liberal Party was asked to attend the dinner and speak; indeed the member for Brant-Oxford-Norfolk was there as a head-table guest. He spoke warmly and fairly about my father, something that touched everyone there. Unfortunately, the member was the best speaker of the night, something we have never forgotten either.

We have enjoyed working with and listening to the current Treasurer in all the capacities in which he has served. I particularly feel a warm spot for him because at the leaders' debate in 1975, when I was running and our polls showed I was in third place in my riding, if the Treasurer had not been kind enough to begin to refer to the then Premier as Bill instead of Mr. Davis, I would probably have lost the election. I thank him very much in a personal sense. By way of rewarding him, we regret here many times on this side of the House that he did not accept a Senate appointment when it may have been available. If there is anything we can do, he should let me know soon.

Interjections.

Mr. Grossman: I want to get it done.

In closing, on behalf of not only the boys at Earl's Shell Service in St. George but also the women there, and on behalf of men and women gathered everywhere across this province who have benefited from the member's time on both sides of the House, let me extend our heartiest congratulations. He has made a marvellous, sincere and important contribution.

I want to dissociate ourselves from Mr. Sheppard's article this morning where he says, "Mr. Peterson may be the new political star and Attorney General Ian Scott the darling of some of the media and intelligensia." We think if only the media and intelligensia got to know the Treasurer, he too could be their darling.

Mr. McClellan: It is my pleasant task to speak on behalf of my colleagues in the New Democratic Party in paying tribute to the member for Brant-Oxford-Norfolk and on behalf of those members of the assembly who, unlike the previous two speakers and our honoured minister, did not inherit their seats.

The Treasurer has achieved the milestone of a quarter of a century in this assembly with all his marbles intact.

Interjections.

Mr. McClellan: I did not think that was a controversial statement. He has survived with all his marbles intact and with a marked improvement in his personality and temperament, unlike the experience most of us go through. We recognize that signal accomplishment. Something, perhaps having to do with the change that occurred in March 1985, has put a contented smile on the minister's face which has not vanished since that day.

The papers this morning were full of articles about our friend the member for Brant-Oxford-Norfolk. They remind us of a number of things, particularly his almost forensic skill in anticipating the wave of the future. For example, in 1976, he supported the illustrious Stuart Smith as leader of the Liberal Party, thereby putting into limbo for a full 10 years the member for London Centre (Mr. Peterson), for which we thank him. As well, in 1984, he supported Jean Chrétien, another of his accurate predictions. I recall so clearly in January 1985, lowly worm back-bencher that I was, drinking coffee with the member in the lobby and lamenting the fact he had been passed over for appointment to the Senate.

I recall previous farewell speeches, particularly in 1976, when he stood down as leader of the Liberal Party of Ontario. The tributes at that time reminded us of what those of us who have served with him during the past 10 years have come to appreciate: his extensive, encyclopaedic knowledge of Ontario and of all the small nooks and crannies of this province. I do not think there is another member in this assembly who knows more about more parts of this province than the member for Brant-Oxford-Norfolk. We have had the benefit of the tremendous breadth of his knowledge of the people of this province for a quarter of a century.

The Globe and Mail, also a paper of national record, does document—and I think this has to be pointed out—that despite his reputation as a frugal and parsimonious farm person, he does have a taste for canaries washed down with expensive Beaujolais and for fine, expensive red wine.

Today, I want to assure him of our affection and respect. All of us who have had the opportunity of working with the member for Brant-Oxford-Norfolk know him to be a forthright man whose word is his bond, a man of complete and utter integrity with whom it has been a real privilege and pleasure to work. I am sure my colleagues share those sentiments.

His father served for 43 years in the assembly, so the member is only halfway on in his sentence, unless of course he succumbs to the blandishments of the Senate. We will have to wait and see. In the meantime, we offer our congratulations and best wishes to him, his wife, Dorothy Nixon, and his family.

Mr. Speaker: The Treasurer may have a word in response.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I cannot recall a more uncomfortable quarter-hour in the 25 years I have experienced in this House. I hate this stuff.

I want to thank my good friends who have spoken for their kind remarks. I certainly appreciate that. While all of us enjoy the opportunity to serve our fellow Ontarians in this House and to take part in the democratic process, the real, memorable enjoyment is our interaction with good friends and colleagues in this House. That is the most enjoyable and, in the long term, productive and valuable part. There is no doubt about that in my mind.

1410

When I was first elected, I was ensconced in seat 119, now the seat of the member for Hastings-Peterborough (Mr. Pollock). That was mine. I immediately made good contacts with my New Democratic Party friends and always enjoyed these relationships with all parties. It is often said elsewhere that while we can debate heatedly, and sometimes acrimoniously—unfortunately, we sometimes have differences of opinion that are not real and often have differences that are real—it rarely interferes with our personal friendships, and I think that is a credit to the human condition. We are very fortunate that this is true and will continue to be true. I have a feeling this has been maintained in this House perhaps more than in some other Houses. Comparisons are not valuable, but I think the tradition here for decades has been this close personal association, which is an extremely valuable adjunct to our democratic process.

When I first assumed my place in the House, the members had no offices at all and no telephones, except for a pay phone in the hall—just out there by the government caucus office—which took nickels in those days. There was no secretary, and when this was put to Mr. Frost, who was then Premier and who, when I came in, sat in the front bench at place 1, where the member for Windsor-Walkerville (Mr. Newman) now is, he always said, “Look, you are elected to a seat in the Legislature; that is it.”

He was quite serious. We had ink in the inkwells that are now blocked off with nice little

circles of walnut. We had pens with nibs that shoved in and we wrote with those. All our letters would be placed in the box which, for posterity, is still there. If one put a letter in there to be posted, it might not be picked up. We seemed to get along all right.

The Leader of the Opposition then, my good friend John Wintermeyer, had a very nice office in the members’ reference library, or whatever we call that nice room in the west lobby. I do not want to spend a lot of time on that, other than for members to contemplate how our facilities and amenities and the availability of assistance have increased.

It is not only as Treasurer that I think of those extra dollars; I often think also as a member of the House whether the effectiveness of the work we do in the House has increased. That is not quite so clearly set out. It is still somewhat problematical. However, when I hear the questions of the member for Nipissing (Mr. Harris), I realize he must have a vast array of researchers assisting him in these matters.

In those days, it is interesting to note, the members could not get home as readily since the House sat for lengthy evening sessions, often going through on a regular basis until after midnight or until 1 a.m. or 2 a.m. I am very glad we have abandoned evening sessions, although from time to time I say publicly they should be brought back on some occasions.

Most of the members stayed in the Royal York Hotel because it had a nice rate for us. We paid \$5 a night, but if one wanted a cheap room, one went to the King Eddie, which was \$3 a night. Since then, inflation has affected that; and I should add in parentheses that we paid for that out of our tax-free expense allowances, I put that out for members to think about.

It is funny. I can remember those things much more clearly than the dramatic issues that have swept back and forth like tidal waves in this chamber. All of them were important. But as is so often the case in politics, particularly when one gets oneself in some kind of trouble, which from time to time all of us do, and goes home and thinks, “O God, is this not terrible?” a month later one cannot remember what the big deal was all about. The nice part of this business is it is difficult to remember whom you are mad at and what the big issue was a month ago.

I have enjoyed it tremendously. People tell me that is obvious, but I can tell members also that I feel very satisfied with my position here, just as I felt my position in opposition was worth while. I can tell my friends that one gets used to it. It gets

better; so they should not despair. They are going to like it better and better.

I go back to what I said to begin with. We have great responsibilities here and no one should question that what we do is worth while. Whether we are in opposition or government or whatever our individual responsibilities are, it is worth while and valuable. However, ahead of everything else, the human relationships are the things of personal value that we will remember. I thank my honourable friends for their kind remarks and I look forward to being associated with them for many years in the future.

Mr. Pope: Now.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Let's get back to it.

Mr. Speaker: In this harmonious spirit, I now inform the members that it is time for question period.

ORAL QUESTIONS

GASOLINE TAX

Mr. Grossman: I have a question for the darling of the media and the intelligentsia, the Treasurer of Ontario.

Mr. Ashe: The honeymoon is over.

Mr. Grossman: He said he found the previous 15 minutes uncomfortable, so I want to change his perspective a bit, if I can.

Since we first raised the question one day ago of the gasoline tax, of the increase the Treasurer put in his first budget, another half a million dollars has been taken away from the motorists of the province because of the tax increase he brought in in that first budget. The boys and girls at Earl's Shell Service in St. George would be interested to know this. Since the tax increase has resulted in about \$160 million per year in excess revenue and since he boasted of \$400 million in excess revenue in the first six months, is he now prepared to consider revoking his tax?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I did not boast of the excess revenue; I reported it. Most of the excess revenue is based on the personal income tax that is collected on our behalf by the government of Canada. It is their projections that we use for budget purposes. There is some indication that the excess revenue for the remainder of the year might be even greater than the increase previously reported. Of course, this will be brought to the member's attention formally when we are informed of it and when the regular quarterly report is made. I make no apology for that. I do not want to apologize for the buoyancy of the economy and the fact that our revenues reflect that.

In response to the honourable member's question, I was concerned that there was something in his comments, both in the House and outside, that indicated that somehow or other our tax system now permits increased revenues as the prices go up and does not allow revenues to reduce when prices go down. Of course, that is not correct. It is a flat 8.3 cents per litre. The member himself pointed out that when he was Treasurer, during the bad old days of ad valorem at the 20 per cent level, the revenues from gasoline tax actually doubled in a very short period of time. At 8.3 cents per litre on gasoline at Earl's and elsewhere, which is about 40 cents a gallon, the percentage is slightly up at something like 21 per cent, as the member indicated.

Mr. Grossman: Of course, the Treasurer is quite right. What happened with the previous ad valorem was that as the price of gasoline went up the ad valorem tax produced more revenues in lockstep. What happened was that when the price of gasoline dropped, this Treasurer stepped in to stop consumers from benefiting from a lower net tax. When it got to its high, he pegged it there. The prices dropped and, as a result, he is getting half a million dollars more per day from motorists than he would have had he not pegged the tax where he did.

He just indicated that he is going to have not only \$400 million in extra revenue, but more likely, I guess, the \$800 million which this party predicted the day he brought down his budget. His smile confirms that at the very least.

Mr. Stevenson: How about a billion?

Mr. Grossman: We will talk about that at a later time.

Mr. Speaker: And the question is?

Interjections.

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Mr. Grossman: Given that he has all this revenue, I say seriously to the Treasurer, would it not, in fairness, be right to say to the motorists of this province, ad valorem or no ad valorem, he will simply fix the tax at a lower rate and give them back the half million dollars per day which he is taking from them these days and which he has admitted are not needed by him?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Unfortunately, the same argument, if there is any validity in it, can be made for personal income tax, which has more buoyant revenue than was projected. The honourable member might be prepared to say our personal income tax rates should be reduced to maintain the revenues at where they were when the member was Treasurer. I suppose we could

say the same for corporation taxes and other aspects of taxes that, on general economic buoyancy, have been rather fortuitous as the economy has expanded.

This does not mean our expenditures have been able to be maintained at the same levels. There are demands from opposition members and members of the government party for additional expenditures. The member is well aware that we have placed in motion improvements in transportation, although we do not earmark the gasoline funds but use them in many other aspects of our provincial responsibility which these additional revenues go to support.

I do not apologize for tax rates. All of us in this House know it is our responsibility to establish taxation at levels that support our programs. I am very glad we have been able to do that and at the same time reduce our cash requirements. That should be commended and not criticized.

Mr. Grossman: I want to read to the Treasurer this excerpt from recommendation 30 of the final report of the Advisory Committee on Resource Dependent Communities in Northern Ontario on the subject of gasoline prices in northern Ontario. He will recall very well that during the election campaign his leader promised to lower the price of gasoline in the north. Indeed, I suspect the minister promised to do the same when he was campaigning as leader of the Liberal Party.

I quote from the report of the committee his party established, "That the effective level of gasoline prices in the north be reduced by the equivalent of five cents per litre through a redistribution of the excise tax on gasoline."

The Treasurer is taking an extra half million dollars a day from the consumers of this province, including the motorists in northern Ontario. Surely he would at least acknowledge that with that half million dollars a day increase it is time now to implement the recommendations of his own task force and of his own leader and do something about the price of gasoline in the north and do it today with their own money.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Do it today? The member must be aware that the increases in gasoline revenues are based to some extent on increased utilization of gasoline as well. That is a fact. While I do not want to dodge in any way the prospects of improvements for the travellers in the north, the member must be aware that if the gasoline tax were reduced in the north, we would have to have very large additional legislative forces to control the price at the pump.

In Alberta, for example, where there is no gasoline tax at all, the price at the pump is very similar to what it is here and the revenues go elsewhere. If the member is asking us to pass legislation to put in some sort of price controls, which the member no doubt supports, associated with gasoline costs, I am not thinking seriously of that at this time.

CREDIT CARD

Mr. Harris: Concerning the matter of the credit card fiasco, when this selective basis was picked by him or his ministry instead of calling tenders, why did the Treasurer, if he were not going to call tenders, not at least invite proposals from the 11 companies operating in Ontario? There are five Visa operators, three MasterCard operators, one American Express, one Diners Club and one enRoute, so there are 11 legitimate different banks, trust companies or companies that offer the services he says his ministry was looking for. Can the Treasurer tell us the criteria he used selectively to leave five of those out and pick the six that he did.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The request went out to those companies that were capable of and interested in providing the sort of accounting process that would most fulfil the requirements for the control by Management Board of these cards. A certain risk would be involved, I suppose, in making them available, rather than cash advances, which is the way it was always done, to the senior members of the public service. One part of the area of consideration was the ability to provide a useful accounting process that would give us the kinds of control we felt we needed in this regard.

There was an extensive tendering process. I am not sure how many were on that—six, seven or eight—so that there was plenty of competition in this regard. The honourable member must be aware that we were endeavouring to get the best service we could for those civil servants who would be using the card, so that if they travelled in Ontario and elsewhere in the world on public business, and no other, they would have a card that would be accepted and the associated accounts would be rendered in a way that would fit into our accounting practices, so that the responsibilities would be clearly tied down. It was on this basis that the six tenders were requested, and a selection was made of the lowest.

Mr. Harris: The Treasurer will know that we are talking about an estimated 11,000 cards. We are talking about a lot of business to go into the

marketplace for one company to the exclusion of all the others. We are not talking about a small account. We are talking about a very important account to the financial institutions that provide these services in this province.

Surely the Treasurer must be aware of some reason for which he excluded the only all-Canadian company that provides these services, a company that has great accounting systems, enRoute, incorporated here in Ontario.

He must have a reason for excluding them, because they wrote to him after many phone calls to ask why they were excluded from this process. They wrote to him on July 18 in a letter from G. F. Kossecki, director of sales, central region, asking, "Why can't we tender?"

On July 29 they wrote again, to Murray Meynard, the assistant director, with a carbon copy to the Treasurer. No answer.

They wrote again on August 7 to the Treasurer—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Harris: This is important to the question.

Mr. Speaker: I appreciate that, and the question has been asked.

Mr. Pope: The question has not been asked.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I remember the letters. When the member says they were not responded to, I am surprised because I remember signing letters in response to them indicating—

Mr. Harris: You did, about three months later.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I wanted to find out why they were as well. My own information is that they could not offer the wide variety of acceptance that was needed. On that basis, we made the selection otherwise, probably on the same basis as the Tory caucus decided to use American Express for its employees. It makes a lot of sense.

Mr. Harris: In the light of all these letters, in the light of the fact that it was the only Canadian company—here is its book, enRoute, and the number of establishments it services—and in the light of the fact that when some time ago the federal government tendered for the same kind of services—which is probably why the Ontario government decided to follow suit—it invited all 11; and who does the Treasurer think was the cheapest and the best of the 11 and provided the best accounting services for the federal government? EnRoute, the only Canadian company.

He quoted his lowest tender as \$55,000 up to \$275,000, based on \$5 a card and 11,000 cards. Some quoted \$5, some quoted \$6, one \$15 and one \$25, and that is how he got his figures. This seems to be the big justification.

Mr. Speaker: Question.

Mr. Harris: When enRoute tendered the federal government, the charge on an account such as that—I called them today and on any large account, they tell me, there is no charge; nothing. They provide them free. They would have been the cheapest because they would have been zero versus \$55,000, \$60,000 and \$165,000. Why was enRoute excluded from this process?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The judgement was made that the utilization of the card would not be extensive enough for the requirements of the senior civil servants. That judgement was made.

Interjections.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: That is all right. That is fine. The government of Canada owns that company, and the judgement of our officials was that it should not be admitted to the tendering process.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mr. Rae: I have a question of the Minister of Community and Social Services. Following the questions that were asked yesterday by my colleague the member for Port Arthur (Mr. Foulds) about the number of children in Port Arthur and in the northwest of this province who are being treated in psychiatric institutions, could the minister comment on the fact that we have now learned that, in 1984-85 statistics, 814 children up to the age of 19 were being treated in psychiatric institutions? An additional 2,651 were being treated in general hospitals across the province, only four of which have units that are particularly for children, and another 321 were in special hospitals, many of which do not have special treatment facilities for children.

Given the fact that this House made a very solemn decision 10 years ago with respect to the treatment of kids who have psychiatric problems and determined that in no circumstances should they be considered adults and treated in adult institutions, can the minister explain the complete deterioration in care and the fact that so many kids, thousands of children, are being treated in adult psychiatric facilities when these facilities are in no way appropriate for the type of

care we would want to give our children in Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: The honourable member is correct that the treatment of children in an adult facility is not appropriate. The situation that was brought to my attention yesterday by the member for Port Arthur indicated that 12 children had been treated at the Lakehead Psychiatric Hospital. I have since done some checking because I admitted to the member yesterday that I did not have the facts; I had not checked with the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston) on that situation.

My understanding now is that, about six months ago, there was an agreement between the two ministries that all children below the age of 16 who needed psychiatric treatment would be screened by the regional centre in Thunder Bay and in every case where another appropriate method of treatment was available that is what would be used.

At present, the only children who are in fact admitted to the Lakehead psychiatric facility are those who have very serious needs. While that is an adult facility, the children who are there are completely segregated from the adults. They receive one-to-one treatment by the nursing staff. At present, there is only one child in that facility.

Mr. Rae: The problem I am having is that the minister is giving me an answer that is confined to the situation at Lakehead. I am aware, as the member was aware when he asked the question, that there is only one child as of today. Our concern now has broadened to the fact that there are thousands of children across the province who are being placed in institutions that are not appropriate.

We have passed two laws in this Legislature in the past 10 years in an effort to focus on the special needs of children and to make sure that a situation which was commonplace 10 years ago would not continue. Now we find there are thousands of children in institutions that are not appropriate. What is the minister going to do to make sure that children are not being treated in adult psychiatric institutions in Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: At present we have 89 children's mental health centres across the province that provide children's mental health services. In a number of other communities we have an adolescent unit at a local psychiatric hospital or at a local general hospital. In either case, we as a ministry believe that the needs of the children are being adequately met in those communities.

In two locations we have an inappropriate situation such as the one in Thunder Bay that was

described yesterday. In both those locations we are currently working with local children's mental health units to have a residential facility in place. However, there continue to be situations where family physicians or parents choose to place children in a psychiatric hospital or in the psychiatric ward of a general hospital.

In addition, the definition of "children" for children's mental health centres is more commonly accepted as 16 rather than 18, so most of what I say applies to those under the age of 16.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: The minister is answering yesterday's question today. Today's question is much more serious.

Yesterday, the member for Port Arthur pointed out that in 1984-85 at the Lakehead there were seven children in psychiatric institutions. My leader has told the minister today that in that same year in Ontario there were 814 children in psychiatric institutions, forgetting the Clarke Institute and all the general hospitals around Ontario.

The Minister of Health in his letter to the member for Port Arthur recognized that this is an ever-increasing problem. Will the minister table with us at the earliest opportunity last year's figures for the number of children who are in adult psychiatric hospitals, general hospitals and specialized hospitals such as the Clarke, how long their lengths of stay were and whether his ministry knew about them, which in the Thunder Bay case it did not know until the member for Port Arthur brought it to the attention of the ministry?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I ask the member to make one correction. I did not know about it, but my ministry did. That is where the information was brought to my attention.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: That is not true.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I have copies of correspondence where it was brought to our attention.

Mr. Wildman: By the member for Port Arthur.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I admitted I did not know about it. I am not saying my ministry did not know about it. There is a distinction there.

With respect to the range of services being offered, the member will be aware of the fact that in many children's mental health centres we have a nonresidential component for the services being offered. We also have a number of residential facilities. For example, in Thunder Bay, Kinark is one where there are 30 beds available for both native and non-native children whose psychiatric needs are not too serious.

There are other situations, however, where there is a joint effort between the Ministry of Health and us in recognizing that our competence to deal with very serious psychiatric needs is limited and has to take place in a psychiatric hospital.

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DAY CARE

Mr. Rae: I have a new question to the same minister. Can he tell us whether the reports that are gathered by inspectors whose task it is to inspect licensed child care facilities in Ontario are posted as a matter of course in those facilities and made available to parents whose children are in those facilities?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I will confirm it, but to the best of my knowledge, no.

Mr. Rae: Just so the minister will know, our research establishes that the reports are not made public as a matter of course and are not made available to parents as a matter of course. In fact, they are regarded by a great many branches of his ministry as information that is available only if a parent requests it. The report itself is not made available, but we have been told by one of the ministry officials that if a parent phones, the officials will tell the parent what types of questions he should be asking the operator.

Can the minister explain the complete discrepancy between the position of the Liberal government with regard to this problem and question as it relates to day care and the attitude which his party in opposition always took with respect to the openness of the nursing home inspection situation?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I am not sure whether I understand the relationship between day care and nursing homes. It is fairly obvious that my colleague the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston) has indicated the direction in which he is moving with respect to the inspecting of nursing homes. The honourable member will be aware of the fact that we have an inspection branch. Our program supervisors inspect day care centres, and if there is a concern they will deal with that concern with the operator of the centre. Frankly, if the operator is not prepared to make the necessary changes, the centre can lose its licence.

It is quite true that if parents contact us, we will give them whatever information we have, but it is not made available as a matter of course.

Mr. Rae: I feel as if I am in some kind of time warp listening to this answer from the minister. When I first came to this House, there was a

generation of questions already being asked about the secrecy of nursing home reports. We fought a battle with different Ministers of Health, Tories all, the member for Don Mills (Mr. Timbrell) and the member for St. Andrew-St. Patrick (Mr. Grossman), and finally we got a position where nursing home reports were made available. The information was made public and the reports were required to be posted so we could find out what type of licence was held, what complaints were issued and what infractions were found by the inspectors.

I have a very simple question to the minister. What type of transformation has taken place in his Liberal heart or in the members opposite so that what was appropriate to be asked with respect to nursing homes is not appropriate to be asked, to be decided or to be kept open with respect to day care centres?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I do not sense there is anything that is inappropriate. Frankly, I would be quite prepared to examine the suggestion that has just been made by the honourable leader of the third party, and it probably could be done. It is just not something I have particularly paid attention to at present.

The inspections are done. If there is a problem, the problem is corrected. In the process of correcting it, my staff works very closely with them. If there is a determination that it will not be corrected, then the licence is in jeopardy.

The information is available to parents if they wish it. I believe it is a matter of mechanism rather than availability.

LOCATION OF FEDERAL AGENCY

Mr. Sterling: I have a question for the Treasurer and Deputy Premier. In October 1986, our federal government announced in its throne speech that it was establishing a new Canadian space agency. Can the Deputy Premier tell us what representations he has made on behalf of the most logical location for the federal space agency in Ottawa or somewhere in the province? What representations has he made on behalf of the people of Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I have made none.

Mr. Sterling: The Treasurer will be happy to know that none of his colleagues has made any representations either, according to the Deputy Prime Minister of our country and the Minister of State for Science and Technology. However, I want to indicate to the minister that Quebec has actively lobbied that this agency be placed in Montreal.

Mr. Speaker: And the supplementary?

Mr. Sterling: Is he going to protect Ontario's interests or is he going to be faced with another rearguard action plan, as he was in the case of the financial institutions that are now favoured for Montreal and Vancouver?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I can assure the honourable member that I will follow up on his suggestion. However, while it is extremely worth while that the government of Canada is going to make a substantial commitment to that, we want to be a part of it, of course.

If it is anything like the CF-18, we do not want to be in the same position as Manitoba. However, I do not want to downgrade the honourable member's suggestion and I will certainly follow up on it.

PLANT SHUTDOWNS

Mr. Rae: I have a question for the Treasurer in the absence of the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye) and the Premier (Mr. Peterson). Would the Treasurer care to comment on the situation at Alcan in Kingston, where several hundred workers discovered this morning that there was to be no more employment for them? Several of these employees heard on the radio that they were going to be out of work. The work will cease in stages starting on January 31, and a certain section of the mill will be completely shut down by April 3, affecting 335 employees.

Can the Treasurer tell us how he explains the failure of the government to bring in legislation that at its very least would ensure that employees do not hear on the radio that they are going to be out of work in two weeks' time when they have been at the mill for several years and when the mill has been in place in Kingston for 46 years?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: It concerns me and everybody in this House in a very serious way—not nearly as much as the workers to whom the honourable member is referring, of course—that proper notice procedures were not entered into. Even in the case of the Neilson's-Cadbury chocolate plant closing we feel the same difficulty was there, and the Minister of Labour and all of us in the cabinet and in the House are concerned about this.

It seems to me only reasonable that these people inform the officials of the ministry so that all the services of the ministry and other facilities at the community level are readily available for the workers who will require that sort of assistance.

I had a chance to look into the matter—not that I am in any way expert—and, of course, the figures

that the member has put before the House are correct. The company is still continuing with its expansion both in capital and in other parts of its operation, and certainly the company is viable.

I cannot explain the absence of legislation, other than that those matters, along with others related to them, are under active consideration.

Mr. Rae: Perhaps the Treasurer, with his vast experience, to which all of us have shared in paying tribute this afternoon, can reflect on the following fact; and I know he will share that experience because of the length of time he spent in opposition. I have been promised legislation in this House on 11 separate occasions—the Treasurer's comment today makes it 12—since July 1985, when the Liberal Party formed the government in this province. Where is it?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: It is under active consideration.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr. Davis: We understand why the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway) is unable to respond to the educational needs as outlined today by the Ontario Public School Trustees' Association, because the primary problem in education is controlled by the budget of the Treasurer, and so my question is directed to the Treasurer.

Can the Treasurer explain why he allowed the provincial share of education funding to drop from 48.6 per cent to 44.9 per cent since he became Treasurer 17 months ago? By this action he has demonstrated the failure of his government's commitment to the election promise of the Premier (Mr. Peterson) to restore the provincial share of education to the 60 per cent level.

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Hon. Mr. Nixon: I am sure the honourable member is aware that in two budgets, and more recently in announcements having to do with the transfer policy of the government, we have been commended not for generosity but for recognizing the importance of improving those transfers. The Minister of Education, who should be answering this question, is showing me recent publications, all of which are based on comments of spokespersons for school boards.

The Queen's Park Letter from the Association of Large School Boards of Ontario says the current government is "responding to these needs following a decade of provincial underfunding of education's operating and capital needs." It was the member's friends who were part of the decade of underfunding.

The publication that most members have access to, Ontario Education, published by the Ontario Public School Trustees' Association, says the three big winners in these education sectors have mounted intensive lobbies—Health, Colleges and Universities and school boards—and they have been successful in improving these payments. I quote, "Also, the increase in capital funding is a significant departure from the past several years." I rest my case.

Mr. Davis: No matter what the Treasurer says, in the last 17 months there has been a four per cent drop in education funding in the province. This morning the Ontario Public School Trustees' Association, supported by other trustee associations and teachers across this province, outlined the critical problems that now exist in providing a first-class education system in Ontario.

I note for the Treasurer's information that had he maintained the 48.6 per cent funding the previous Conservative government provided—in a time of economic restraint, I would point out—he would find an additional \$250 million today should be transferred to educational needs. In effect, the Treasurer has instead placed that burden on the property owners of this province by an increase in their property taxes.

Does the Treasurer not believe an adequate education is the right of every child in this province or does he believe, as his fiscal policy seems to indicate, the property owners of Ontario must continue to bear a disproportionate cost of education while he avoids his responsibility?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I can only point out to the honourable member that we have increased substantially our support for operating budgets well beyond the inflation rate in both the budgets with which I have been associated. The member must realize that school boards, college boards and university boards have accepted with enthusiasm the improvement in funding. Every member of this House stands for quality of education and improvement in that quality. We feel our budget and our financing are moving towards improving that.

PENSION FUNDS

Mr. McClellan: I have a question for the Minister of Financial Institutions, who yesterday indicated his willingness to accept opposition amendments to the pension benefits bill which would require mandatory inflation indexing of pension benefits.

Given that when the bill comes before the House we in the New Democratic Party will be

moving that amendment, and given there is every reason to believe the leader of the official opposition has overcome the cold feet he developed in 1984 and will undoubtedly be supporting that amendment, in expectation of that, will the minister today agree to bring in a government amendment as part of its own legislative package so that ordinary working Ontarians can retire with financial dignity and protection against the ravages of inflation?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The member will know we have made a statement that we are committed to the principle of mandatory inflation protection. However, having said that, there are many problems. The leader of the third party yesterday indicated potential problems where plans could be wound up and the very problem we are trying to resolve does not get resolved and worsens. We have set up our committee to look at the implications and to make sure we do it in such a way that we bring industry along with us to best serve the interests of both the members of the plan and the plan's sponsor.

Mr. McClellan: The most recent figures from the Pension Commission of Ontario establish that there is a corporate run on pension surpluses. Whereas the previous all-time high figure was \$180 million in 1985-86, the most recent figures tabled in answer to my question just before Christmas indicate that between April 1986 and November 1986 a total of \$250 million was withdrawn from surplus pension fund accounts. This is an increase of 300 per cent.

Since the minister's moratorium does nothing to prevent companies from shutting down pension plans and legally stealing the pension surplus, will he agree today to extend the moratorium on the withdrawal of surplus pension funds to include termination of plans, to protect workers from the ongoing legalized theft of their moneys in their pension funds?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: Provision by contractual arrangement on the winding up of a plan stipulates where the surplus funds are to go. It would be totally irresponsible on the part of the government to renegotiate those contracts retroactively. Contrary to what he has said, we do not anticipate or even indicate there is any great run on pension plans at the moment. We have a moratorium in place for ongoing plans and under normal circumstances the plans that are being wound up are no greater or lesser than they have been in the past.

[Later]

Mr. McClellan: I actually have two points of order, the first of which is to correct my own

record. I am told by my colleagues that when I asked the question about pension surplus funds, I said there was \$180 million in surplus fund withdrawals in 1985-86 and \$250 million in 1986. I should have said there was \$180 million in withdrawal requests last year and \$250 million in withdrawal requests this year.

ONTARIO INSTITUTE FOR STUDIES IN EDUCATION

Mr. McFadden: I have a question for the Minister of Colleges and Universities. What action has he taken to help bridge the impasse that has developed in the current negotiations between the University of Toronto and the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education?

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: We considered the possibility that there would be what my friend the member for Eglinton describes as an impasse many months ago when the matter was directed to their attention. The Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) sent both the University of Toronto and the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education a letter requesting that they enter into negotiations to achieve our policy of bringing those two institutions together under one roof.

The member for Eglinton is right. Those negotiations proceeded, and a short time ago both institutions sent in separate reports. We now are considering what is contained in each institution's analysis of the possibilities of that merger. One of our options to be considered, as suggested to them many months ago, is that the matter may well be referred to the Ontario Council on University Affairs. That is one option.

Mr. McFadden: Since the current quagmire in relation to the future of OISE and its programs was created by the provincial government as a result of its proposal to transfer OISE to the University of Toronto, will the minister guarantee this House and the students and staff of OISE that OISE will continue to operate fully after the expiry of the current affiliation agreement with the University of Toronto if no long-term arrangement has been made with the University of Toronto prior to the end of June 1987, when the current affiliation agreement expires?

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: I am not in the habit of rendering guarantees in this House, particularly when the subject matter has to do with two autonomous institutions that have a life of their own, separate and apart from this government.

Mr. Rae: When are you going to stand up to Nixon?

Mr. Martel: Particularly if Bob Nixon is opposed to it.

Mr. Warner: You only guarantee things for the Clerk.

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: My friend the member for Eglinton will know, as will the members of the New Democratic Party who are shouting and screaming, that there is an affiliation agreement currently in existence between those two venerable institutions. It expires in June. My estimation is that, as they have done over so many years in the past, they will enter a new affiliation agreement as we look for more models that will effect the policy this government articulated many months ago.

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YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

Mr. Warner: I have a question for the Minister of Skills Development. Since it is quite evident that the only major program this government has with respect to youth unemployment—that is, Futures—can accommodate less than 10 per cent of the unemployed youth in this province, I would like to know what he intends to do to provide answers for the other 90 per cent who are unemployed.

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: I am rather surprised at that question from the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere. In connection with the Futures program, not long ago he said that finally a government was bringing together the hotch-potch of programs that existed in what the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) calls the bad old Tory days, although the member also said that it was not a very great program because it was a Liberal program. Now he seems to be chastising the government for having a comprehensive program to deal with unemployed young people in this province.

The fact is that he erroneously suggests it deals with only 10 per cent of the unemployed young people in this province. That suggestion is not borne out by the statistics. Fifty thousand young people will be served by the Futures program this year. There are still too many unemployed young people, and we are still looking for ways in which to make the Futures program even more effective and far-reaching to deal with every one of those young people looking for a job in this province.

Mr. Warner: I guess it is not a surprise that this minister attacks the credibility of the Dryden report, as he is now doing in challenging the figures Mr. Dryden brought forward. I wonder whether he can move away from his complacen-

cy at all to recognize what Mr. Dryden recognizes, that programs such as Futures will fail because they do not and cannot deliver what is expected of them. To quote from the report, "And when they fail...they come to stand also for all that a government is not doing about youth unemployment."

I want to know specifically what the minister and his government intend to do to answer the serious problem of youth unemployment in this province.

Mr. Wildman: You cannot stickhandle like Ken Dryden.

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: No, he played goalie.

As he did yesterday, my friend is once again quoting from the report Ken Dryden submitted to me and to the province a month ago. I ask him to reread the report, because he uses it as a basis to criticize a program which Mr. Dryden said was effective as a program. Admittedly, Ken Dryden has suggested within his report that this government, all other provincial governments and the federal government ought to reorient the way they do business and to start off with a statement that there will be no unemployed young people in their jurisdictions. We do not have the ways and means of achieving that objective yet, but let the member keep watching, because we are working on it.

FARM TAX REDUCTION PROGRAM

Mr. J. M. Johnson: I have a question of the Minister of Municipal Affairs. In question period on Monday, January 12, the minister admitted to this House that he and his staff had provided incorrect information to members of the assembly about the farm tax rebate program. In many cases, this information was passed on to the township clerks and constituents, resulting in considerable aggravation. Can the minister explain why his staff gave incorrect information to members of this Legislature and their staff, and why did it take over three months to correct the so-called human error?

Hon. Mr. Grandmaitre: As I said in the Legislature previously, it was a human error. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and the Ministry of Government Services work together to help the farmers of Ontario apply for tax rebates. As I admitted to the House, a human error was made. I was advised that all the applications had been mailed. Since then I have tried to apologize for this human error.

As of last Monday, the applications have been mailed. That has been guaranteed by the Toronto

post office. I assure the member that every farmer will be able to apply for such a tax rebate.

Mr. J. M. Johnson: That is the very answer we have received for the past three months—that every application has been mailed—and indeed they were not mailed. Since the minister admitted on Monday and again today that it was a human error and that there was default by his ministry or the Ministry of Government Services and its acting minister, will he now provide compensation to those farmers who have been penalized because of the four-month delay in sending out the necessary forms? Are not all our farmers entitled to be treated equally?

Hon. Mr. Grandmaitre: I do not know of any farmer who was penalized for not applying in time. I have not received any request from any farmer. Our ministries have long tried to work together to provide this service to the farming community in Ontario, and we will continue to provide this service to every farmer. At present, I do not know of any farmer who has suffered in the past couple of months because these applications were not mailed on time.

UNIVERSITY FUNDING

Mr. Morin-Strom: I have a question for the Minister of Colleges and Universities about university funding for colleges in northern Ontario, in particular for Algoma University College in Sault Ste. Marie. Earlier this week, the Premier (Mr. Peterson) indicated that he felt the province was doing something for universities in the north in assisting Laurentian in the area of mining research and Lakehead in the area of forestry. However, overall university funding in northern Ontario is woefully out of proportion to the funding going to the major universities in southern Ontario, and nowhere worse than in Sault Ste. Marie where at most only 20 per cent of our university students are even able to get a university education in the local university.

Algoma University College has had a proposal in front of his ministry for nearly two years. Detailed plans have been laid out.

Mr. Speaker: And the question is?

Mr. Morin-Strom: The minister made a commitment last April to support that project, but no specific, tangible action has yet been taken by him. Can the minister tell us when he is going to act on the proposal that is in front of his ministry?

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: It is my day today. I am glad to see that my friend the member for Sault Ste. Marie is asking about that institution.

Mr. Stevenson: Your day is coming.

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: I am glad to hear that from the member for Durham-York.

First of all, I want to get some facts straight. The reality is that the funding we are providing for northern institutions has been greatly augmented over the past 19 months, including announcements I made some two and a half months ago for an additional increment to the funding for northern institutions.

My friend is right. There are problems at Algoma University College. There has not been a report before the ministry for two years. For approximately two and a half months, I have had a report that begins to work on a new mission for Algoma University College. It was the very first institution I visited as Minister of Colleges and Universities, and it is one for which I have a particular soft spot in my heart. We are working on a new mission statement for that institution. I have told the people in Sault Ste. Marie that I am committed not only to the maintenance of that institution but also to its growing and thriving in that community.

Mr. Morin-Strom: I am not criticizing the minister for the inadequate historical funding for universities over the long term and the lack of development of a major university in Sault Ste. Marie; that certainly is not the responsibility of the current Liberal government. However, the college has been working on this mission statement for a time, and I understand the detailed package has been in front of the minister for several months. The college is anxious to hear an answer on this and is very hopeful that a major funding commitment will be made in the budget coming up for the next fiscal year. Will the minister be supporting the proposal of Algoma University College so that it can expand its services in the local area?

1510

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: In the fullness of time, we will make an announcement about our financial support for Algoma University College. However, I should tell my friend from Sault Ste. Marie that the problem is not one of lack of funding to support the students who are there. The problem we are having there is in getting a sufficiently large student base of students who want to attend there in order to create that critical mass of students necessary to operate vital programs. That is what the mission statement was all about; that is what we are analysing now, and it will not be too terribly long before the member, the people of Sault Ste. Marie and the people of Ontario have an answer to it.

AGRICULTURAL STABILIZATION PROGRAMS

Mr. Stevenson: I have a question for the Minister of Agriculture and Food. Does the minister support the concept of market-linked or allotment-linked programs for the stabilization of prices for agricultural commodities?

Hon. Mr. Riddell: I know the honourable member has made that proposal, and of course I always look at proposals that are made by my opposition critics. I am not going to say at this time whether I support it until I know exactly what is involved in that type of marketing, but I can tell the member we are looking at it.

Mr. Stevenson: Several proposals of this general type have been brought forward in the past two or three years by individuals and groups in the agriculture industry. Which one of those proposals seems most attractive to the minister at this time?

Hon. Mr. Riddell: I am not sure I am the one who should be making that kind of decision. This is a decision that has to be made by the producers themselves, and I would rather not influence their thinking. The member knows that at the present time there are two schools of thought on the marketing of beef cattle.

I do not think I am the one who should be influencing their decisions about what they want. We do have the legislation in place, and if they want to follow one particular marketing route then all they have to do is come to the Farm Products Marketing Board, express their wishes and have some names on a petition and the gears will be put in motion. But that is the producers' decision; it is not a decision for me to make.

SALE OF UNREGISTERED HOMES

Mr. Philip: I have a question for the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations. Is the minister aware that the Greenwin construction company is selling condominiums on the corner of Don Mills Road and Duncan Mills Road in North York even though the city of North York and the provincial cabinet have said the project could not go ahead and have refused the rezoning? If so, why does the minister not stop this kind of ripoff?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I am aware of that particular situation, and the officials in my ministry are looking into it.

Mr. Philip: Is the minister not aware that the developer has an economic feasibility clause; in other words, a clause by which he can get out of the contract later down the line, having used

these people's money? Is he not aware that the sale of the units is simply a way of pressuring North York into changing the rezoning without any protection to the purchaser? Why does the minister not stop this practice, which was started by the previous Conservative government when it allowed the sale of unregistered homes such as these? Why does the minister not ban that kind of practice and protect the consumers?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: That is an area we are looking into, and I expect to be able to do something about that.

LOCATION OF FEDERAL AGENCIES

Mr. Sterling: I have another question for the Deputy Premier. In November 1986 the Picard commission, a federal commission that was reporting on the economic future of the city of Montreal, recommended to the federal government that the Export Development Corp., Telesat Canada and the Canadian International Development Agency be transferred from the Ottawa area to the city of Montreal at a cost of 2,500 jobs in the Ottawa-Carleton area. What representations has the Deputy Premier made to the federal government to preserve these institutions in the Ottawa-Carleton area?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The idea of transferring those from Ottawa to Montreal is, in my view, nonsense. If that were to be seriously considered by the government of Canada, I think it would deserve to lose the support across the country that it started with in the election three years ago.

It is almost as much nonsense as the prospect of the government of Canada establishing Montreal as an international banking centre, in spite of the fact that Toronto has pre-eminence in that regard. Politics is one thing, but if that policy disrupts any kind of fair and equitable decision by the government of Canada, it is a serious matter.

I do not believe the government of Canada is seriously considering transferring that organization. I trust it will not.

Mr. Sterling: The Deputy Premier represents the government. What has he done? He is telling me he has done zip-all. Why does he not do something for the people of Ontario and the people of Ottawa-Carleton? Do something, make a call.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Time for oral question has expired.

Mr. McClellan: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker—

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I want to hear a point of order if the members will allow it.

ATTENDANCE OF MINISTER

Mr. McClellan: My second point may be a point of privilege; it has to do with the attendance of the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley). There is a major environment issue facing the province that has to do with Kimberly-Clark. The Minister of the Environment arrived after question period yesterday and indicated he was unavoidably detained. He indicated he would be here today, although late, for question period, but he has not shown up. It is clear that the minister is hiding from the Legislature and trying to avoid giving answers to this current and serious problem.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I believe the member said he had a point of privilege. I cannot see where that is a point of privilege. It is a point of view, and he did the same as on the first point, got it on the record. That is fine.

PETITIONS

NORTHERN HEALTH SERVICES

Mr. Eves: I have a petition addressed to the Honourable Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"That the Ministry of Health recognize and include the district of Parry Sound as northern Ontario for all health services but especially for the purpose of northern health travel grants."

CONTROL OF SMOKING

Mr. Sterling: I have a petition addressed to the Honourable Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"We support Bill 71, the Non-Smokers' Protection Act, and ask all members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to vote for it in committee and on third reading in the Legislature.

"I urge"—and that includes 7,716 people in this group—"the government of Ontario to support this bill by allowing it to pass through all stages of parliament."

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Mr. McCague from the standing committee on general government reported the following resolution:

That supply in the following supplementary amounts and to defray the expenses of the Ministry of Transportation and Communications be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1987:

Provincial transportation program, \$1,300,000; municipal roads program, \$2,000,000; ministry administration program, \$1,100,000; and provincial transit program, \$12,800,000.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

Mr. D. R. Cooke from the standing committee on finance and economic affairs presented the following report:

Your committee wishes to indicate its strong support for the inclusion of Toronto in any federal legislation presented to make Canadian locations as tax-exempt, or partially exempt, international banking centres. The proposal of the federal government to exclude Toronto in federal legislation to create international banking centres would be ill advised and potentially highly damaging to the economy of Toronto and the province. The committee should forthwith commence hearings to investigate the potentially serious consequences of the federal government's proposal.

Mr. D. R. Cooke: Briefly, this report results from a resolution brought before our committee by the member for Durham West (Mr. Ashe) and another resolution, almost identical, from the member for Erie (Mr. Haggerty), which were combined this morning and passed unanimously by the committee to show the concerns the committee has for the seeming federal policy of suggesting that Vancouver and Montreal, but not Toronto, become tax-exempt international banking centres.

The wording of the report does not in fact suggest that our committee has an opinion one way or the other on whether there should be any international banking centres in Canada. We are of the view that if there should be international banking centres, then Toronto definitely should be one of those.

It is the intention of our committee to call witnesses to attempt to determine the background

behind the decision on the part of the federal government. They will include the federal Minister of Finance and the federal Minister of International Trade. It is the intention of our committee to try to determine exactly what the impact would be on Ontario. I hope these hearings will throw some light on the subject. Until we have further information, I would move that the debate on the report be adjourned.

Mr. Speaker: There is no necessity for a motion.

INTRODUCTION OF BILL

RETAIL BUSINESS HOLIDAYS AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Ashe moved first reading of Bill 188, An Act to amend the Retail Business Holidays Act.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Ashe: Briefly, this bill will allow all retail establishments that sell only books, newspapers or periodicals, and all art galleries to be open on Sundays and other public holidays.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

House in committee of supply.

ESTIMATES, MINISTRY OF HOUSING (continued)

On vote 1901, ministry administration program:

Mr. Chairman: When we broke the last time we were dealing with these estimates, on January 12, we were at the end of vote 1901. I do not think there was any more discussion desired on this vote. By the lack of response, I appear to be correct. Therefore, in keeping with the agreement of the committee on that day that we carry each vote at the end thereof, I will ask whether vote 1901 in its entirety carries.

Vote 1901 agreed to.

On vote 1902, Ontario building program:

Hon. Mr. Curling: It would be appropriate at this time to respond to some questions raised in vote 1901 so that, for the record—

Interjection.

Hon. Mr. Curling: Some questions were raised under vote 1901. Would the House like me to respond to them or—

Mr. Chairman: The time to respond to them was before we took the vote.

Hon. Mr. Curling: Then that is fine with me.

Mr. Gordon: It is my understanding that we did not vote on vote 1901 the other day.

Mr. Chairman: That is correct; we just did now. We just finished.

Hon. Mr. Curling: Thank you for your co-operation.

Previously, in my opening statement, I referred to our new approach to housing in this province under our assured housing strategy for Ontario. A major element of that initiative is reflected in this vote, the building industry strategy.

Mr. Gordon: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman: Do we have a copy of the minister's remarks?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I am sorry. I think it is coming now. There is a copy.

Mr. Chairman: Is the minister reading a statement?

Hon. Mr. Curling: Yes.

I will just wait until the copies are distributed. If the member for Sudbury (Mr. Gordon) has his copy now, I will continue.

As I said earlier, I referred to our new approach to housing in this province under our assured housing strategy for Ontario. A major element of that initiative is reflected in this vote, the building industry strategy. As members may know, this is a comprehensive program to revitalize the building industry.

This program forms an integral part of the assured housing for Ontario policy. Like all aspects of that policy, this plan was developed only after extensive consultations with industry, labour and government representatives. It is designed to increase employment opportunities, expand production for domestic and foreign markets and foster career development within the ministry.

A Building Industry Strategy Board has been established with representatives from industry, labour and government to direct implementation of the plan. Harold Shipp of Shipp Corp. in Mississauga has been appointed as chairman for 1986-87. As members all know, Mr. Shipp is a well-known home builder, contractor and developer. His involvement is very important in our inaugural year of the building industry strategy.

The plan has five goals; and those goals are to streamline the building regulations, to expand production in domestic and foreign markets, to improve productivity, to increase co-operation and awareness within the industry and to promote the establishment of a world-class building centre.

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Before outlining specific initiatives that are on the way to achieve these objectives, let me review the current building environment in Ontario.

Building construction is one of Ontario's largest and most important industries. In 1985, nearly \$15.2 billion was spent in the industry. Building construction is Ontario's largest employer, with a labour force twice that of the agricultural sector and three times that of the automotive industry. The industry is diverse and very complex. Nearly 400,000 men and women work in more than 80,000 firms, most of them small to medium-sized. That means one out of every eight persons in the province makes his or her living in the building industry. Building construction also influences other sectors of the economy. Last year nearly 125,000 jobs were created in spinoff employment.

The building industry, although a powerful economic force in the economy, has in the past been taken for granted. The tendency has been to view the industry in bits and pieces rather than as a single entity. We think of traditional members of the building industry such as architects, engineers, builders and developers, but the industry also includes a large supporting network of manufacturers, distributors, financial institutions, educators, industry associations, exporters, importers, regulatory agencies, buyers of construction and, finally, government.

A building industry strategy is essential to unite all these industrial sectors in planning the future. The first goal of the strategy is to rationalize building regulations and improve their administration while ensuring that the interests and safety of the public are maintained. When we talk to industry representatives, regulatory reform emerges as a top priority. There are literally hundreds of provincial acts and regulations that in one way or another affect the building process.

A steering committee on regulatory reform has been working to streamline these regulations. The committee, which includes building officials and members of private industry, has undertaken a number of initiatives in this direction. A survey of regulatory obstacles has been completed and an analysis of municipal administrative procedures has been conducted. A catalogue of all the provincial legislation affecting building has been compiled, reviewed and overlaps identified. A senior level interministerial committee has been established to eliminate overlaps and duplication in building legislation across the government.

In keeping with this government's commitment to an open process, the steering committee on regulatory reform also launched a major campaign to solicit public reaction and to propose amendments to the Ontario Building Code. This campaign included public hearings throughout the province. All the recommendations received from various industry representatives were carefully considered for incorporation into the new Ontario code, which became effective on October 20, 1986.

The ministry, in conjunction with the National Research Council, is also developing a technique to determine how much is enough when it comes to regulation. A unique economic risk assessment model will measure technical merit, cost-benefits and levels of risk relative to all future proposed building regulations. Eventually, we will be able to assess all the building regulations in Canada and even in the world through this computer model and get a balanced evaluation of which regulations are valid and which should be modified or discarded.

The ministry is continuing actively to encourage federal-provincial liaison in regulating the building industry through a variety of initiatives, which include:

- A representation to the Nielsen task force focusing on the need for a similar streamlining of federal legislation;

- A meeting of deputy ministers in July, followed by a meeting of ministers responsible for the building industry in November, to encourage recognition of the economic and social importance of the building industry across Canada;

- Several joint research studies that will pool the efforts of the National Research Council and the provinces;

- A joint federal-provincial effort to computerize the national and provincial building codes—ultimately, the industry will be able to use the computerized codes to improve the efficiency of this building, design and inspection process to facilitate the interpretation of code requirements in general; and

- A proposal to the National Research Council to study the role of standards instead of prescriptive regulations in the building industry.

Future tasks in the area of regulatory reform include assessing alternative regulatory systems, ranging from private sector inspections to elimination of duplicate plans; examination and inspections for buildings designed by certified architects and/or engineers; examining performance standards, revealing alternative code

formats and reviewing the roles of the Building Code Commission and the Building Materials Evaluation Commission to ensure that they meet the industry's needs.

I said earlier that the first goal of the building-industry strategy is to rationalize regulations and improve their administration. I have outlined several initiatives that are designed to reduce the number of building regulations. Let me now outline for members the steps that have been taken to help improve administration at the municipal level.

Under our building action program, financial assistance is available to help municipalities promote more efficient administrative practices in their building departments and to enhance the skills of their building department staff. The building administration fund encourages municipalities to make changes that will improve the processing of building permits and make it possible to share services with neighbouring municipalities. The building officials training grant helps building officials acquire new skills and upgrade their expertise so that they do the best possible job in the face of rapid changes in their field.

Traditionally, there has been a wide disparity in the efficiency of the administration and enforcement of building regulations. By way of background information, in 1982, building officials asked the province to establish a uniform professional training program. Subsequently, an assessment of training needs was conducted and the Municipal Inspectors Training and Education Council—MITEC, as it is called—composed of municipal building officials and staff of the ministry, was established.

With its assistance, courses were designed on the role and responsibilities of municipal inspectors in administering and enforcing the code. The objectives of the education program are to provide consistent, high quality training; to promote uniform interpretation of the regulations; to promote development of competent and well-trained inspectors; to increase efficiencies in the building process; and to communicate the need for competent administration and enforcement of the provincial building regulations.

The courses are taught by seasoned building officials and are professionally designed to incorporate state-of-the-art techniques for adult training. Courses are delivered on location throughout the province to maximize accessibility and reduce costs for municipalities.

The education program consists of several levels of instruction. At the introductory level,

The Inspector and the House course deals with the role and responsibilities of municipal inspectors. A model single-family dwelling forms the basis of instruction on foundations, external and internal building envelopes, heating and ventilation and plumbing.

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At the second level of instruction, a 10-day course on technical requirements provides knowledge and understanding of the inspector's responsibility for inspecting small buildings used for residential, business and personal service, and medium- and low-hazard occupancies. Examples of such occupancies include town houses, semis, duplexes, stores and small plazas.

At the intermediate level of instruction, course work addresses inspection of large buildings and special occupancies. Such occupancies include small apartment buildings, cinemas, art galleries, arenas, small industrial centres and shopping malls.

Advanced-level training focuses on larger and more complex buildings.

In addition, we have developed a six-day course devoted to legal processes and responsibilities. This course deals with the administration and enforcement responsibilities of building officials and covers the general legal process and court system, major legislation, order-writing and issues such as liability, confidentiality of records and powers of entry.

Other courses have been designed to provide specialized instruction on various parts of the code, unique structures or unusual applications. Additional courses will be developed as new needs are identified and could include instruction pertaining to farm buildings, institutions, structures constructed or adapted to high-energy conservation, television studios, helicopter pads and electrical substations.

I am very happy to tell the members that municipal response to the training program has been overwhelmingly positive. The program commenced in January 1985. By the end of this winter, we will have delivered 40 sessions to more than 1,000 participants. We anticipate completing development of the core training program for building officials by the end of 1987. We are confident from the response to date that building officials will take the complete series.

While the province is not contemplating mandatory certification or licensing for inspectors at this point, municipal associations will be adopting ministry courses for their certification programs.

We will continue to explore opportunities to provide training courses to other code users and industry. Potential registrants include architects and engineers, contractors, inspectors for other levels of government, and students of architecture, engineering, and architectural and structural technology.

I would now like to outline the initiatives this government has taken to achieve the second goal of our building industry strategy, namely, to expand production for both foreign and domestic markets. From our research we know that poor and inadequate market information is a major constraint for industry managers. Lack of information hampers planning for export markets and does not allow managers to anticipate and offset import penetration. Through the Building Industry Strategy Board, initiatives are under way to develop qualitative timely market information on opportunities in domestic, United States and global markets.

As a first step, a database is being established to provide detailed information on: building industry activity, focusing on expenditures in residential and nonresidential construction activity in Ontario and Canada; the impact of the construction industry on employment, income, government tax revenues and imports from other countries and provinces; domestic export and import of building products, focusing on market volumes and shipments by producers; and building industrial activity in export markets, to review the volume of building construction expenditures in Canada's major building-product export markets and to identify major competitors for the US market.

Identifying new export opportunities and import replacement opportunities is critical to a healthy building industry and to the people who work in building. For instance, increasing our exports of building products by a modest 10 per cent will create 7,700 jobs in Ontario. Reducing our imports by a similar amount will create another 8,000 jobs. The rewards can be substantial.

Much of the research to compile a database has been completed, with reports currently undergoing consolidation and refinement. After input from Statistics Canada is compiled and analysed as part of the overall picture, the consultants and a steering committee of the Building Industry Strategy Board will identify domestic and export market opportunities and disseminate this information to appropriate industry members.

Another thrust of our plan to expand production involves creating a construction information

system for building products. The system will allow us to generate and disseminate, store and retrieve product information on an industry-wide basis.

A subcommittee of the Building Industry Strategy Board has been established under the chairmanship of Miles McMenemy, senior vice-president, corporate affairs, Cadillac Fairview Corp. It will examine current construction information systems, evaluate alternative systems, determine industry needs and develop an information system to meet those needs.

Let me now turn to the third goal of our building industry strategy, to improve productivity. The building industry strategy tackles productivity on several fronts, with the primary focus on training and education. Let me outline some of the initiatives under way in this area. We know from our studies that effective skills development for all sectors of the building industry is essential. The building industry strategy addresses educational and career development needs at every level, from tradesmen and tradeswomen to managers, builders and contractors.

For instance, two unique pilot programs devoted to middle management are currently being developed on a cost-shared basis with the Construction Management Institute. One program focuses on the project co-ordinator at the general-contractor level. The second program is for the contract administrator in an architect's office. Both are computer-assisted learning programs and are the first of their kind in the construction industry.

In the area of skills training for the trades, my ministry is working closely with several building associations to determine industry needs, both short-term and long-term. To this end, ministry staff recently conducted a series of discussions with the training and education committee of the Toronto Home Builders' Association. Following these discussions, the association hired a full-time employee to liaise with my ministry's building industry branch in addressing members' skills-development needs.

Similar discussions are now under way with the Ontario Home Builders' Association and the Council of Ontario Construction Associations to gain a broader perspective on industry members. Our work with these associations is also driving home the need for real commitment on the part of the industry members to training.

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On yet another front, we are working closely with the Ministry of Skills Development to

ensure Ontario's construction industry is allocated its fair share of training assistance dollars under the Canadian Jobs Strategy. We are also working with community industrial training committees to ensure that the construction industry will have access to training assistance money under a new federal-provincial training agreement that was signed recently.

Under the agreement, training assistance will be given directly to the committees to purchase local labour-needs surveys and required training programs. Traditionally, the construction industry has not been represented on these committees, but its presence now will allow it access to these funds, a total of \$9 million in 1986-87 and more than \$40 million in 1987-88.

A subcommittee of the building industry board is also providing input into an upcoming review of apprenticeship programs in Ontario to ensure construction industry needs are addressed.

Our building industry strategy also recognizes the need to attract more young people to the field of building construction. At our building forum held in November, a building career centre was established to give young people information about a wide range of building career opportunities, the skills required, how to develop those skills and the salary expectations. I am pleased to report that almost 4,500 students from across Ontario toured the building career centre, where 25 industry associations provided career guidelines for our young people.

I mentioned that the career centre was part of the building forum that took place in November. That brings me to the fourth goal of the building industry strategy, namely, to increase awareness and co-operation within the building industry. More than 2,000 people attended this very successful initiative, which was cosponsored by the Building Industry Strategy Board, the Council of Ontario Construction Associations and many other industry groups. I want to report that the forum was self-supporting; that is, we broke even on this major undertaking.

Finally, I want to spend a few minutes discussing the final goal of the building industry centre, a world-class centre for Ontario's building industry. The Building Industry Strategy Board, after consultation with the construction industry, identified the need for an industry-driven Ontario building centre. This centre would be the magnet to attract the fragmented and diverse efforts of this highly decentralized industry. It would be an international centre, housing the daily activities of a vibrant industry.

Building centres have been built in many other countries with varying degrees of success. These include Belgium, Denmark, France, Japan, the Netherlands and West Germany, to name just a few. The Bouwcentrum in the Netherlands, for instance, is economically viable and contributes significantly to the success of the building industry in that country.

However, there are no building centres to speak of in North America. There are trade centres in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Dallas and most major cities in the United States. There is also Place Bonaventure in Montreal. These, however, are trade centres, not building centres, and they are mainly concerned with furniture, furnishings, garments and lately computer products.

We have the opportunity in Ontario to create a blend of those other centres, understanding their strengths and weaknesses. What we propose could ensure the economic and product viability of an international building centre in Ontario. The centre could become the permanent hub of economic activity for the industry, its participants and its users. The building centre would not be just research- and technically-oriented. The building centre would be the focus for the marketing of the building industry.

A major effort needs to be initiated to reverse the serious trends currently facing the building industry. For example, construction activity has declined as a percentage of gross national product by as much as 27 per cent over the past 10 years and Ontario's share of Canadian construction expenditures is growing smaller, down from 34 per cent in 1971-75 to 26 per cent in 1981-84.

What is proposed as a building centre does not exist anywhere else in the world. It would be an innovative first for Canada, a unique concept that would become the permanent centre for the daily activities of the building construction industry.

A building centre such as that being envisioned would be comprehensive. There are 11 individual components, ranging from an extensive exhibition component that would create a one-stop shopping centre for the buyers of building products from at home and abroad, and an electronic database system component that would utilize the world's most advanced database systems, to a design-centre component that would feature computer-assisted design, libraries and software and offer architectural advice. The remaining components include a communications component, a business and office component, an educational component, a research

component, a trading component, a financial component and a hospitality component.

At present, a subcommittee of the building industry is investigating the feasibility of such a centre for Ontario.

Mr. Gordon: The minister has given us quite an extensive briefing on vote 1902 today prior to discussing it, but to really examine vote 1902 and the Ontario building program he has been talking about, to examine it in any kind of detail and with any kind of relevance, it is important to reflect in comparison with what we were discussing last Monday in the House.

As the minister will recall, in our discussions on Monday we noted there had been a 34.4 per cent increase in expenditures in that vote over 1985-86. In other words, in the ministry administration program there had been an increase from \$9.2 million to approximately \$12.4 million, which is, as the minister well knows, a \$3-million increase.

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The one thing we all want in this province and in this Legislature is to be sure that when there is an increase of that magnitude in any one section of a budget in comparison with vote 1902, it is evident that there is going to be a tangible benefit to the people of Ontario. I am sure the minister would agree with me on that.

Interjection.

Mr. Gordon: I see that he has agreed with me. Let the record show that he said, "For sure."

Unfortunately, to be perfectly frank with the minister, I cannot see that benefit. I can see an excessive increase in that budget, an increase of 34.6 per cent, but in the last session on Monday, the minister was not able to explain to us the objectives or the reasons why. We had an increase of 42 per cent in legal; we had a tremendous increase as well in information services, an increase of as much as 30 per cent. These kinds of increases give us pause. We all know in this province that administration is basically pushing paper. Pushing paper at an increase of \$3 million does not build an apartment unit worth \$60,000.

Today, the minister read a very extensive statement called Building Industry Strategy and went into a fair amount of detail about his plans. One of the things I would like to know, and then I can continue with what I am saying, is exactly how much money the building industry is going to be putting into this building industry strategy.

Hon. Mr. Curling: That is a good question. The member can see the confidence that the

private sector is placing in the government lately. I expect they will put in as much as they can. I cannot give the member a definite figure of how much the private sector will put into the building industry strategy. Since it is a vibrant industry, it will put in as much as it can to get a return and make it worth its while. They want to make sure that the building industry strategy works properly in the province.

Mr. Gordon: I do not think any of us in this House is against the fact that the Ministry of Housing plans to work closely with the development industry to create jobs in the future. I do not think anybody in this House is against us seeing better building practices in this province or against seeing that tradesmen are better trained. The tradesmen themselves take courses to see that they achieve a certain level of expertise. There is no one in this province who is against seeing the export of our construction materials or goods to other countries. We are all in favour of that.

What gives people cause for concern is when they hear the Minister of Housing get up in the House and tell us he has a building strategy with all kinds of objectives and all kinds of training programs supposedly involved with it, with what sounds to me a very extensive computerization of practically everything that is related to building or housing in this province, no matter which city or town one happens to be in.

People have a concern when they hear all these plans and when they hear that the increase in this budget is so significant. In 1985-86, the budget for the Ontario building program was \$2.2 million. In the 1986-87 estimates, which we are talking about right now, the minister's projected budget is \$6,644,640. That is a change of more than \$4,435,600 and an increase of 200 per cent.

It sounds to me as if the moneys the ministry is spending are primarily to help the developers sort out the various planning codes that have been put in place by municipalities around this province. Developers always complain about the fact that towns, villages and cities want to control the destiny of their neighbourhoods, of their wards. Does the minister mean to tell me that he is going to spend 200 per cent more, up to \$4.4 million over last year, and yet he does not know how much money these people whom he says he is going to help will put into it?

I thought the development industry, the construction people, were in it to make money. I thought that was one of the reasons they were in the development industry. That is one of the reasons they build homes, apart from the fact that

people want homes. If a person wants a home, the contractor builds the home for him or her. What is the minister doing? Is he trying to make them wealthier? Can he explain to this House what is going on?

Hon. Mr. Curling: As the member observed, my opening statement on that vote was rather extensive. There were two reasons for it being extensive. At this time, in the calendar year of the budget, we are well into the estimates. I thought I would provide the member with things that have been done.

I went to great pains in expressing to him the size and the type of industry with which we are dealing. We are dealing with a \$12.1-billion industry. I went into detail in expressing to the member how big the industry is. I related to him the number of people who are employed, the size of it and how fragmented this industry is.

I also went into detail in laying out the strategy by saying that governments cannot stand by and ignore an industry that is so large. If the member is saying that \$6.6 million is a whopping amount of money to an industry that will employ one of the largest numbers of people in this province, I then wrestle with the thought of whether he does understand the industry itself. I would urge him to reread Hansard or the brief to see the amount of detail I went through to tell him why one must spend \$6.6 million to handle things such as regulations that are hampering the progress and efficiency of the building industry.

I can go on if the member wants me to—I know he wants to ask me very pertinent questions later on, so I will not take up his time—to tell him the other strategies to improve the industry. Recently, he saw how disorganized it seemed with the Ryan Homes issue. The industry felt it could look to a ministry or ministries to help organize itself. I do not think \$6.6 million in an industry such as that is very much.

The last point I would like to mention is that the building centre, about which I spoke with such emotion and excitement, because I know it will do very well for the province, and not only for the province but also for Canada, will all be built by private money, by private investors.

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Mr. Gordon: Really, I find the minister's answer to be completely inane. Granted, when it comes to single-family housing and the building of duplexes in this province, we are going through a real boom perhaps at present and we are going to be going through a boom for the next two years; but anybody who knows anything about the demographics of this province will tell

the minister that much of the single-family housing that is being built now is going to serve the population that is now coming up and that will follow this population.

I see the minister taking a budget that formerly was \$2.2 million and jacking it up to \$6 million, an increase of \$4.4 million, a 200 per cent increase, and I see him throwing money around like water. To me, this is no different from what he did with Bill 51. His idea is to go around and spend money to get groups together and give them whatever they want. His ministry is out of fiscal control, and I do not think he as the minister is running it.

I will give him an illustration. Let us take the administration of his ministry. The administration for the entire ministry, all his administration programs, which run throughout the whole budget for 1986-87, will cost \$42,899,900, and that is an increase of \$16,367,000 over 1985-86. That is an increase of 62 per cent. Can the minister tell me how many new homes that is going to build? Administration does not build homes. What is he up to?

Hon. Mr. Curling: If I understand the honourable member, he is saying we should not have any structure there to co-ordinate the industry. He says administration does not build homes. If I understand the member properly, he understands housing and construction as only residential. It is more than residential. He feels this government or this ministry has not done more since it has taken office than was previously done. I would then ask the member to go back and re-examine the records to see the number of rental units we have built and approved, to see the co-operation we have got in the industry.

If I understand the member too, if he feels that the people who are employed in this industry—I go back to that—should not be efficient, competent and skilled people, architects and designers, that we cannot exploit those types of qualities and the kind of product we have and that we should not co-ordinate ourselves in order to exploit those qualities, then I would say he does not understand what housing should be all about. I feel that the increase in funds that we have got during the last year will show great results and is showing good results now.

Mr. Gordon: Let us deal with one issue the minister brought up about the amount of housing there is in this province at present. Let us talk about that for a moment. Let us read the latest statistics from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp. In London, there is a 0.6 per cent vacancy rate. That means there are only 277 apartment

units available out of a possible total of 46,145. In Ottawa, it is 1.7 per cent; Sudbury, 0.7 per cent; and Toronto, 0.1. This means in Toronto there are only 452 apartments available out of 452,547.

What is the minister trying to tell me about all this money he will be spending on the construction industry? What he has done is literally opened up the coffers for these people. All of us in this House could understand it if he was going to spend an extra \$500,000 or \$700,000, but when we see the figure the minister is talking about, it blows us out of the water. He cannot tell me that is not giving the shop away. It is.

I know the minister is anxious to talk about the paper he just gave, so I will give him that opportunity. Will he tell us the objectives of the Ontario building program?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I will be happy to tell the member the prime objective of this program. It is to lead Ontario's building industry towards increased job creation, industry growth and development by establishing new markets, increasing productivity and reducing the regulatory burden the industry has faced over the years.

I presume that might be a little bit difficult to comprehend because in the past there was no strategy in place. I remember introducing the comprehensive housing policy. Many times I stated in this House I could not believe the government in power did not have a housing policy. Now that we have a strategy, it is hard for the member to believe we play a part, that we are going on and that it is accepted by the industry. He is asking what it is all about. I ask the member to go back to the briefing book and look at page 68, which will tell him what the objectives of the building program are.

Mr. Gordon: I would like to ask the minister about the rent review administrators. How many rent review administrators will be assigned to each branch of the Ministry of Housing? How will the number of such administrators be allocated?

Hon. Mr. Curling: With all due respect, I will ask the member if we can address that under the proper vote. I do not think it falls under this vote. We are dealing with the Ontario building program vote.

The Deputy Chairman: You can talk on vote 1902 only. That was the understanding right from the beginning. We are going vote by vote. It was proposed by the member for Riverdale (Mr. Reville).

Mr. Reville: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman: I wonder if the member for Sudbury

would mind if I made some general comments about the Ontario building program under vote 1902 before he gets into more of his specific questions? He does not mind? Thank you.

The Deputy Chairman: You will be debating on vote 1902?

Mr. Reville: Yes, absolutely. In fact, I was not going to debate so much as to make a response to the very fine statement the minister read to begin the vote.

At the outset, the minister will probably find it hard to believe what his ears are hearing, because this is one area in which I will not be very critical of the Ministry of Housing, except to wonder what the Ontario building program is doing in that ministry.

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I am not being facetious. I am not trying to compare the relative success of this particular program with that of other programs of the Ministry of Housing. I just have a little bit of difficulty understanding the philosophical connection between the Ontario building program and the rest of the functions undertaken by the ministry.

It strikes me that the activity under vote 1902 relates to the strength of the building industry and the regulatory framework within which it operates. The building industry spends a great deal of its time building things that are not housing, such as industrial buildings, commercial buildings or highways, none of which we recommend people live in, although we know people do live on highways, in factories and sometimes in commercial buildings.

That said, this function has to occur somewhere. It strikes me almost as though it is a job creation function and might more properly rest with the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology. I am not going to get hung up on this type of thing, but it is a bit of an oddball in the Ministry of Housing. Some of the other people in the Ministry of Housing are oddballs too. I will tell members who are they are later.

For some reason or other, my friend the member for Sudbury has understated—it is unlike him to understate things, but he has understated—the magnitude of the change in this particular section, because he is reading from a different line than I would read from. As I look at the program and activity outline, we go from \$2 million to \$3 million to \$9 million. Perhaps the member for Sudbury has been mesmerized by the fancy figures of the ministry, because the difference lies in the special warrants that have been used to gather money. In fact, the amount to

be voted is considerably less than the budget of this section and the magnitude of the increase is about 300 per cent. That seems to be because a whole new activity has been taken on, which is worth about \$5.3 million and which has at least 24 staff connected to it.

In general terms, I am in favour of this activity. I am not sure what payoff the minister is expecting, but there is no question—let me rephrase that. Payoff has a pejorative connotation, and I certainly do not mean that. What is the return on the public investment the minister is expecting here?

There is no question that the building industry is incredibly important to our economy. There is no question that the jobs created by the building are, in the main, very good jobs. They require skill and they pay good wages. There are indeed problems about construction jobs because those in the construction industry are subject to a very high rate of injury, as we know from listening to my colleague the member for Sudbury East (Mr. Martel). It is one of the things that might addressed usefully by the Ministry of Housing, given that its connection and befriending of the building industry has improved so much. That is another entry point into trying to make construction jobs safer.

Having been a construction worker for a number of years, I am one of those who is very much offended by the advertising I see on the television which indicates that the worker is dumb. In fact, what happens on the job site is that the worker does not have a choice about how he or she works. There is an economic compulsion to work unsafely that is laid on workers by their employers. Having been an employer of workers when I was a contractor, that was an issue that was very close to my heart.

I actually had to lecture my employees about working safely and to avoid this type of construction heroism that often goes on, of people dangling off the end of an inappropriate ladder with 100 pounds of equipment, rather than putting up the scaffolding that was provided. That is a function that is not mentioned here, but it is something the minister could do some good work on.

It would be of interest to know from the minister, perhaps at a later time, what target he has in terms of an increase in construction activity in the building industry, so that he can then say to the taxpayers, as can I, that the additional \$5.3 million has been well spent and that we have gone from here to here in terms of investment in the community and jobs. That

would be useful to know. I am sure his staff has considered what target it has in mind and what return on this investment would be appropriate.

What also needs some explanation in terms of the presentation the minister made today is an analysis of why construction activity has declined as a percentage of the gross national product and in terms of our construction activity vis-à-vis other provinces of Canada. My impression is that new home construction, renovation activity and commercial building are booming; so I do not understand how we have lost ground in terms of activity in other provinces. Is some major hydro project skewing the figures in some other province? I cannot imagine that our own hydro activity is less grandiose than that of others. Some analysis is necessary. I suspect it has been done in the targeting work the minister has already done but has not told us about yet.

The minister will know from listening to me speak about housing matters that for 15 years I was in the building trades, both as a worker and as a boss. I have a lot of painful personal experience about some of the matters addressed in his presentation. There is no question that it is past time when the building regulations and codes have to be rationalized. Today in Metro and the surrounding area, the different municipalities deal differently with their whole inspection process and permit application process. Some of their requirements are vastly different.

I recall many an occasion when, if you went across the street from the city of Toronto to the borough of East York, you would confront vastly different situations. This is foolish and needs to be sorted out. There has traditionally been an incredible lack of sensitivity on the part of governments in general towards those who have to work for a living. A contractor cannot afford to stand for hours in a lineup only to be told he is in the wrong lineup.

When I was an alderman in Toronto, I spent a lot of time trying to reorganize the building permit section. There was an absurd situation where the first person in line might be a woman who wanted to replace her porch and the next person in line wanted to build the Toronto-Dominion Centre. Some useful work was done so that the battleships were separated from the rowboats. That sort of thing needs to happen more often.

Specifically, the Ontario plumbing code is in terrible need of revision. For instance, there is incredible confusion about the use of ABS pipe, which has a different impact on the tradesperson or on the person who is paying for the job,

depending on which municipality one is in or even depending on which inspector one is talking to on a given day.

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I know it is an incredibly complex exercise to try to rationalize the codes but they very much need to be rationalized. There is no question that a number of them are no longer appropriate and some of them are incredibly appropriate but have created other problems. For instance, the new fire code provisions are very important but they create various kinds of problems when trying to achieve other goals. A method has to be found whereby these problems can be sorted out.

The other question which is vexing and which may have landed in this ministry from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs is the question of the liability of the municipality in terms of the whole plan examination exercise. It has always struck me as absurd that a municipality has to do an engineering approval on a project. It creates an incredible, absurd municipal liability which is probably not necessary, given the existence of an engineer's stamp on a project. That has been vexing for those municipal officials who have time from their line responsibilities to think about the policy framework and some of the problems.

I am sure some of the minister's officials will have heard from the chief building official of many a municipality that the ordeal and potential legal liability of trying to determine the stress factor of a particular truss—"truss" is an actual building expression; I have to explain that to my colleague the member for Algoma (Mr. Wildman), who is arriving at the age when other kinds of trusses are more popular.

Nevertheless, a truss of any kind is a good thing if it is designed properly. If it bears an architect's stamp, probably the municipality does not have to check it all out again. I see the deputy minister far away, nodding his head. I do not know what that means but I will take it as a sign of some kind.

As I have said, there are wide variations from municipality to municipality, not only in the substance of the matters that are regulated but also in terms of the efficiency and the speed with which they are regulated.

My heart leaped in my breast when I heard the minister use the words "import replacement" on page 18. I thought, goodness gracious, have I missed the minister lurking around the New Democratic Party caucus room, where we talk about nothing else but import replacement? If we could produce more of the products used by the building industry in Ontario, there is no question,

in an industry as large as the building industry, we would create additional spinoff jobs in Ontario, jobs that are very much needed. I applaud the minister's theft of an NDP notion and I have a lot of other delightful notions that I invite him to steal as well. They will be revealed to him in due course.

When the minister talks about skills training, I am concerned that I do not see him working with the tradespeople and their trade unions. Maybe that was an oversight in terms of the list of people he was working with, but it seems to me he should be working not only with the builders but also with the workers to see what their appreciation of the training opportunities is.

I have some concerns about the effectiveness of the training assistance dollars under the Canadian Jobs Strategy program. I know the ministry is working with the Ministry of Skills Development, which is working with the feds, I guess. I do not know whether they have done work on who gets the jobs, on what happens to the people after they have had these jobs or on whether we are just fattening some of the big contractors who already have lots of work and are in a position to put up with the absurd administration of some of these federal-provincial job creation strategies.

Having been involved in some of them myself, I know they are subject to a lot of goofy regulations that militate against the smaller operator who does not have a lot of staff to try to sort out the time lines and reporting requirements or who perhaps does not have the capital to fund the operation until the government finally gets around to issuing the cheque that is supposed to subsidize the program. That is something that needs looking into.

The other thing that seems to be missing is contact with the Ministry of Education to get advice or input on the relevance of the various technical courses that are offered. We hear in the House all the time how the Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions curriculum guidelines have had a negative impact on those who would take technical training and about how technical training is actually discouraged.

There are other problems that are not the minister's problems; they are the problems of the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway), but in the end they are the problems of all of us. If the idea is to try to encourage young people or any people to go into the building industry, then it is appropriate and timely to look at the training that is available in our schools to see whether, after

students have received that training, the building industry is interested in them.

The courses for some of the trades that are offered through our educational system are considered not to be worth the powder to blow them to hell. The young person who wants to take trade training must find an employer who is willing to look for things such as willingness to learn and then take him on, regardless of the education he has received. Our trade training can be much improved. That is another thing the Ministry of Housing, through the Ontario building program, can usefully lobby a brother ministry about.

I was delighted to see that the minister did not read the five paragraphs that for some reason or other, in my copy of his statement, have been repeated. Obviously, the minister is very alert. I want him to know I was alert too and I saw those five paragraphs were repeated. I think he was just trying to trick me. They are on pages 24 and 25.

Mr. Wildman: They must have been very important.

Mr. Reville: They were. Actually, when I saw them repeated, I thought the minister was adopting a technique that I used to suffer through when I was a kid in the choir. The minister at my church used to say everything five times. When I had heard everything said five times, I knew I had to get my comic book shoved away and get my hymn book out again because it was coming to the end.

As a final remark, I am worried about one of the components of the building centre, but not because I think it is a bad idea. I urge the minister to make sure the very last component, the hospitality component, involves a cash bar. The building industry has been known to visit free bars with a lot of vigour. I caution the minister that the hospitality component should come equipped with an audit and a cash register.

Those are my general remarks for the time being. I am sure the minister will want to acknowledge how unaccustomedly gracious I have been today.

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Hon. Mr. Curling: This may come as a surprise to my honourable critic from the third party, but he is always a congenial gentleman. I am not at all surprised that when he sees logical flaws in sensible policies he says so.

Mr. Reville: Do not get carried away.

Hon. Mr. Curling: We are on vote 1902, so I will talk about just that. Later on, he will of course exercise his emotion and criticism. Let me

touch on the last point he made, about the hospitality suite.

Many times, when business is being conducted, the first thing is to understand and know someone in a less tense atmosphere. Also, all this is being paid for by the industry itself. No taxpayers' money is being thrown around to have an open bar. I presume that if they do have open bars, it is their money anyhow.

Another serious and important point the member emphasizes is the fact that young people coming into this industry are turned off about the manner in which they are treated. I am sensitive about that. I think the industry is also aware of that situation. If they are not, it is something on which I keep a watchful eye. From my background, I can see many professional roles that students would go into except that they are fearful of how they will be treated—or their interpretation or knowledge of the profession itself. That is something we should watch.

We should encourage young people. We had a career centre at the most recent forum, and the Building Tomorrow conference was held in November. They were more or less thrilled to know that the industry had taken time out to come to welcome them into the industry—also women, who are not easily attracted to that industry. We are trying to encourage that more.

The member spoke about returns. I expect a tremendous amount of returns from this. The reason for that is they are putting all their ideas together and can exchange ideas. We talk about exports. With that, we could target markets and recognize places that could use many of our resources.

I do not intend to go on, because the member said I might just continue to say how much he agrees with this strategy. If I want to get turned on about this again, I will read the Hansard of his remarks. I do not need to do that any more.

That being said, I hope I have not left anything the member wanted me to comment on. If that is so, I will be glad to comment on that.

Mr. Gordon: I notice on page 27 the minister talks about the decline in the construction industry in the country in general. I wonder whether the minister can enlighten us. For example, he says, "Construction activity has declined as a percentage of GNP by as much as 27 per cent over the last 10 years and Ontario's share of Canadian construction expenditure is growing smaller, down from 34 per cent...to 26 per cent in 1981-84."

Can the minister tell us why this is occurring in this province and in this country? Can he give us some of the reasons?

Hon. Mr. Curling: Although we have recently seen great activity in the residential area of the construction industry, the figures have shown there has been a decline. This business is one of peaks and valleys. Although we see a great activity here, the figures show that, regardless of all that, there was quite a bit less activity in the construction industry.

Specifically, we presume the demand is not constant. One of the things we look at is the idea that we could start distributing where the demand or the supply could be constant so that it would more or less encourage employment on a constant basis, I presume because of the demand they are feeling that is there. I saw a figure today—and I do not want to quote that too much—that most of the houses that will be needed in the next 20 years will be built in the next five years or something in that area.

Concerning what specifically is causing this, I could not give him complete detail, especially on that.

Mr. Gordon: I would have thought the minister would be able to give me an answer on that, given the fact that he is going to be spending great gobs of money in order to promote various strategies. He says he has to spend up to 200 per cent more this year because he wants to improve the construction trades, he wants to get more building materials, perhaps develop better building materials, develop export markets and so forth. However, if the minister cannot explain to this House why there has been such a decline in the construction industry, how can we have faith in him that he knows what he is doing now?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I explained to the member some of the problems we are facing in the industry and told him what the strategy is all about. I have told him about the regulation problems we have and told him the purpose of the strategy. He recognizes that. My honourable friend in the third party also recognizes the strategy is needed that way.

We have also identified that we could do better in exports in our product and our expertise, and the member is saying I cannot tell him why it is declining. I presume he is almost like the economist. I presume he sees me as the answer to it all. His expectations are pretty high. I respect that and I will not let him down. But in the meantime, I will deal with the fragmentation aspect of the construction industry, which I have laid out in my opening remarks, and those areas. I think productivity will be increased as soon as we address those issues.

Mr. Gordon: I made it very clear at the beginning that no one has any objections to there being less regulation; no one has any objections to the construction phase being helped a little more. These are normal things. Most people in Ontario look at it that way. Common sense prevails.

What disturbs me a little, though, is that there seems to be in the minister's report a kind of blind faith in such groups as consultants. I recall a number of years ago when I was the mayor of Sudbury, the regional municipality decided it wanted to do what the member for Riverdale, the Housing critic for the New Democratic Party, was talking about a little while ago: import replacement.

They went out and got a consulting firm and said: "We in Sudbury believe if we could replace some of the types of materials and supplies that go into the major industry in our area, such as the mining companies, perhaps we could have some of this made here in Sudbury. Let us have an import replacement study."

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I was sitting on the council at that time, and being naïve, much younger than I am now, I thought: "Gee, is that not great? Let us have a study. Why not? We will get these consultants to come in and do a study." They came in and did a study. Lo and behold, after the study was done and everybody had read it over, it turned out that the study really did not identify what they had hoped it would identify. As a result, the import replacement study did not work out. It was a bust. Despite the fact that when the consultants first came in, they told the council, "We can do this, this and this, and you will get these results," when the report came in, the results just were not there.

A few years went by. I was still the mayor of Sudbury, and lo and behold, the regional municipality came down again to the regional council and said: "For that last import replacement study we had done, those consultants were the wrong group of consultants. They were not able to handle the study." They were going to hire another group of consultants.

I said at that time: "Look, fellows, forget it. We can figure out more about import replacements as a municipality than these consultants can, coming from their ivory tower in the south." We have to talk that way sometimes in the north. We should not. We do not now; we have become more enlightened. We see everybody as being equal and the same, but there are times when we see things a little differently.

The second group of consultants came up and got the job. Lo and behold, does the minister know what happened? They blew it too. The report was useless when we got it back. They were an even bigger consulting firm. In fact, I think the regional municipality paid more than \$100,000 for that study.

The reason I bring this story up is that I have a suspicion that consultants do not always give you what you think you are going to get for the money you put out. I can see that in this report the minister is planning to spend a considerable amount of money on consultants in this strategy. Can the minister enlighten the House as to what part of the funding of this additional \$4 million we are going to spend in 1986-87 will be going to consultants, and what firms he has in mind to ask to do this consulting work? Better still, because I am very concerned about the kinds of results that consultants bring back, what criteria will be used to select those firms?

Hon. Mr. Curling: Page 73 in the briefing book will answer the first question about how much money will be spent on consultants' services. The member will see a figure of \$4 million there; the consultants' fees will be paid from that.

The criteria that will be used will be the criteria set up by the government under the Manual of Administration. The member is quite familiar with that because he was in the Ministry of Government Services, which handles many of those contracts to see that they go through the proper procedure. We follow that very closely with regard to consultants.

On the question about the details of the criteria that will be used in what will be studied, I can get back to him and give him the types of studies and exactly what we have been doing in that area.

Mr. Gordon: The minister pointed out to me page 73 as the page on which I could find out how much he is going to be paying consultants. I happen to have page 73 right here, and I defy him to show me on page 73 the exact amount the consultants are going to be getting.

The minister made it sound as if all I had to do was read my briefing book. I learned how to read in grade 1, and I can tell the minister right now that there is nothing about consultants on page 73. As a matter of fact, there are salaries and wages, employee benefits, transportation and communications, services and supplies and equipment.

I do not like the suggestion that if only I would read my briefing book, I would know what the devil is going on. I am finding things a little

difficult today because we have a minister who does not know what is going on in his ministry.

There is the other situation as well. If the minister cannot tell us why the construction trades were down over that period of years, as I asked him to do a few minutes ago, it surely is not a very good reflection on his staff. How can he tell the people of Ontario that the Ministry of Housing can get more houses and more apartment units built in this province? A little while ago, I read out to him the present vacancy rate in this province. It is an absolute disgrace. With that, I would like to turn to another point.

Hon. Mr. Curling: Does the member want me to answer that?

Mr. Gordon: Sure; go ahead.

Hon. Mr. Curling: I am wondering what caused my honourable friend to be in such a rage. Of course he is quite a literate man and I am sure he can read, but I question his hearing a little. I said there was \$4 million in services; within that line, consultants will be paid. That is what I said. I have no doubt he can read pretty well. He asked me the figures that would be paid and I said to him I would come back to him and list the consultants, the tasks they would undertake and the amounts that would be paid. I hope that will answer the member's question.

Mr. Gordon: I would like to compliment the ministry on its decision to go ahead with a building trades centre. This is a concept that has worked well in other countries, and in Ontario it could very well prove to be of benefit to us. I would like to ask about this building centre. When is the building centre going to be created? How much public money does the minister expect this centre to cost?

Hon. Mr. Curling: The feasibility study is being done. It was set up under the building industry strategy. I cannot say when, but as soon as the study is done, I presume it will indicate when this will come about. My staff says the study will be completed by the fall. I know how anxious the member is to get this going because he is complimenting us for the fact that this centre is so important. By the fall, when it is ready, I will make sure he has that report.

Mr. Gordon: Since this is such a major project, I wonder whether the minister can enlighten us as to which firm has the study and how much the ministry is paying for it?

Hon. Mr. Curling: It has not been tendered yet.

Mr. Gordon: I thought the minister said it was under way at present.

Hon. Mr. Curling: I said a study will be done and will be ready by the fall. It has not been tendered yet.

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Mr. Reville: Estimates always have a bit of an air of unreality about them because we tend to forget that the money has already gone. I expect most of the money has been spent by now. Surely the minister will not have much difficulty giving us a list of the consultants who were hired and whether they have completed their projects and whether the minister saw that they were good. We would be interested in knowing all those kinds of things and I am sure the minister wants to tell us that in due course.

While he is looking for that information, unless I am misunderstanding—perhaps he will correct me if I am; I will ask him a question and then I will know—in terms of some of the objectives of the building industry strategy, such as the promotion of increased exports of building goods manufactured here and the reduction of imports of goods used here, is a study being undertaken or are we already able to measure whether any strategy undertaken has been effective?

Hon. Mr. Curling: My staff has advised me that none of these studies has been started yet; none of these studies has been done to date.

Mr. Reville: Does that mean none of the consulting contracts has been let?

Hon. Mr. Curling: Yes. The member was asking about the import-export—

Mr. Reville: If I may clarify, up to \$4 million is for services, most of which I understand is for consultants' fees; I assume consultants will undertake the feasibility study for the building trades centre. I am now trying to determine what other studies will be undertaken. Have contracts been let? For instance, is the ministry going to study how to reduce the imports of building goods and how to increase the exports of building goods, or is it just going to measure how well a more strategically minded industry performs?

Hon. Mr. Curling: If the member's concern is about how much has been spent, I gather only about \$250,000 of that \$4 million has been spent to date. The first thing is to identify the issues, challenges and opportunities for the industry. This whole program is pretty new and most of it is just starting up. Of the \$4 million, roughly \$250,000 has been spent so far on the consultants I talked about.

Mr. Reville: That gives rise to the next question. Is it going to be possible to spend the

balance of the money before the end of the fiscal year?

Hon. Mr. Curling: Considering that today is January 15, I am not going on a spending binge; I do not think we will be spending much of that money this year.

Mr. Reville: Then why are you asking for it this year?

Hon. Mr. Curling: If there is a concern that we will lose this money next year, we have made a provision that we will retain that money, so the program will go on. We operate, as with any other programs, to set things in motion and to get programs going. Sometimes it does not move as fast as it should. If things had moved as we had anticipated, we would have spent it all. We would never ask the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) for money that we did not think we could expend within the fiscal year. However, since we did not have a chance to spend it, we have made sure we will not lose it.

Mr. Reville: We had better not let the Treasurer find out that the minister did not spend all his money.

I wonder whether the minister will be tabling in the House soon some numbers that we need in terms of being able to assess how well any of these programs have worked. For instance, it would be useful to know how much in the way of building goods we are currently importing and exporting. Then, in the fullness of time, we can say bravo to the minister because he has changed that relationship or we can say, "Minister, you had better change your approach because it does not work." If the minister will undertake to provide some numbers on current levels of imports and exports, then maybe next year we will remember that and see how well we did.

Hon. Mr. Curling: I will be happy to provide that information to the member.

Mr. Gordon: I have pretty well covered the points I want to raise in regard to vote 1902, but I want to reiterate that while vote 1902 has a program that most of us would say is a commonsense one, the program will make some significant changes to the future of the building industry in Ontario and to the regulations surrounding that industry.

However, I believe the increase in the budget is exorbitant: a 200 per cent increase from \$2.2 million to \$6.6 million, which is a \$4-million increase, and the addition of 27 people to the staff of the ministry. I wonder whether the minister could not go back and sharpen his pencil a little, especially in the last half of this year, to see

whether he could save a little money for the taxpayers of Ontario. As minister, he has a program to manage and policies to put in place. With regard to the Ontario building program, he could have sharpened his pencil a little more.

Vote 1902 agreed to.

On vote 1903, real estate program:

Mr. Chairman: Are there copies of the statement, minister?

Hon. Mr. Curling: Yes, there are.

With respect to vote 1903, the real estate program includes the Ontario Land Corp. and its wholly owned subsidiary, the Ontario Mortgage Corp. Some important policy changes have taken place over the past few months that will have a significant impact on the province. On July 2, 1985, at the opening of the new session of the Legislature, members may recall the Premier (Mr. Peterson) announced that the government was initiating an assessment of all crown corporations and assets and that an advisory group would be established under John Kruger, special adviser to the Premier.

As a result of a paper prepared by Mr. Kruger, cabinet adopted recommendations to develop a strategic policy on provincial land holdings, on Ontario Land Corp. land banking and on the Ontario Mortgage Corp. mortgage portfolio.

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In addition, the Treasurer announced in his budget statement of October 24, 1985, that the government was writing down the difference between the previous book value and the current market value of the lands held by OLC and that the lands would be transferred to the appropriate ministries or sold as market conditions permit.

He added that the loss between book and market value of \$182 million was being written off and that the remaining land value of \$271 million was being expensed. The effect of the Treasurer's statement was to remove the debt repayment and loss constraints and thereby provide new policies and approaches for the disposal of OLC lands.

In keeping with these two important decisions with respect to OLC, it received approval from cabinet in March 1986 to modify its corporate plan by accelerating the disposal of the majority of its lands within a period of five years wherever possible. OLC is responsible for the financing, development, management and marketing of provincially owned lands for residential, commercial and industrial uses.

Until last March, OLC's corporate plan was to sell all its land assets within a 10- to 15-year time frame. Its goals were to repay its total debt to the

Treasurer and to Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp. for those lands held in partnership with the federal government. Those are to offset losses with profits and to sell lands in a businesslike manner as market conditions permit.

OLC lands are of various types and are located through the province. They range from agricultural lands to valuable lands strategically located adjacent to cities and towns. Some are surplus to the government's needs, while others could serve a variety of public purposes. These lands have been grouped into five categories, based on market conditions. Of the total portfolio of some 25,495 hectares or 63,000 acres, approximately half is predominantly agricultural and has no development potential. These lands will be offered for sale as is.

Some 4,000 hectares or 10,000 acres of the lands, or 15 per cent of the total portfolio, is nonagricultural. By going through the local planning process, OLC can increase the value of these lands prior to selling them. Another 133 hectares or 330 acres, representing one per cent of the total, is in an advanced state of development and is ready for sale. A further 200 hectares or 500 acres, held in partnership with the federal government, is also in an advanced stage of development and ready for sale.

In addition, some 800 hectares or 2,000 acres, which are owned in partnership with the federal government, will be sold after obtaining further planning approvals. Several criteria have been adopted to ensure that OLC disposes of the lands in a planned and businesslike manner. In any sale program, OLC must be recognized, on the one hand, as a good corporate player at the community level and, on the other hand, as a prudent agent for the taxpayers of Ontario who want to realize a fair return on their investments.

With this in mind, we made the following recommendations, which were approved by cabinet in March 1986: First, in the sale of large land holdings, OLC must not affect significantly the market value of privately held land in a community. In other words, lands will be sold at a pace that is consistent with local market conditions. This is particularly important in the case of the large provincial land banks in the Nanticoke and South Cayuga areas of southwestern Ontario. I will describe our sale plan for Nanticoke and South Cayuga later in my remarks.

OLC will go through the normal local planning process to change land use designations on the 10,000 acres that have development potential. With appropriate land use, the lands will be more

attractive to potential purchasers. This means increased revenues for the province at little additional cost. It is important to point out to members of this committee that OLC, like any other developer, follows the regular planning procedures. It does not have, nor does it seek, special advantages over private developers.

The interest and concerns of other levels of government will be considered in the disposition plan. Changes in our plans to develop or sell land are being disclosed and discussed with our federal partner, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp., where appropriate, and with the municipalities in which the lands are situated. The lands will be marketed in a way that maximizes, wherever possible, broader provincial objectives, including industrial promotion, employment, agriculture and, of course, housing.

When we announced our assured housing strategy, one of its major components was to promote the use of government lands for rental housing. In that regard, a special committee of senior government officials has been formed to identify provincial land that could be used for rental housing and to review proposals for the development of rental housing on government lands. The rental housing utilization of lands committee, or RHUL, is chaired by the Deputy Minister of Housing, Ward Cornell. The committee includes deputy minister-level representatives of the Ministry of Government Services and the Management Board of Cabinet secretariat, as well as the assistant deputy minister responsible for the Ontario Land Corp., Robert Riggs.

Reporting to that senior committee is a working committee of staff from my ministry and the Ministry of Government Services. The aims of the working committee are to identify and recommend provincial lands that could be developed for Ministry of Housing programs; to establish the current market value of these lands; to take them through the local planning and development process and make them suitable for rental housing; and, finally, to market them.

The work of the committee has been progressing very well. The provincial lands in Lindsay, Brockville, London, Etobicoke, the great city of Scarborough, Hamilton, Pembroke and Peterborough have been identified for potential use for rental housing programs. In addition, a tender call has just been issued for the sale and conversion to housing of Victoria College in Cobourg, which has been vacant for several years. Staff in my ministry have been working with the ministries of Government Services,

Citizenship and Culture, and Energy to preserve this historic building in a new and useful form.

The recent sale of land in Cambridge to Toyota is an example of what we are trying to do. The sale will boost industrial development, create thousands of jobs in the Waterloo region and generate spinoff benefits for the local economy. In addition, over the past year, Ontario Land Corp. has concluded sales of land in Colborne, Cobourg, Hamilton and Nanticoke for nonprofit housing developments.

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On a broader front, my associate the acting Minister of Government Services (Mr. Conway) announced last September that Professor Eli Comay of York University has been engaged to look at a number of sites in Metro Toronto and area. This study would look at lands owned by this ministry and other ministries to determine what lands could be made available for development for housing and other provincial uses and for private development. Some 20 sites are now being studied with regard to location, zoning, suitability and municipal issues. We hope this study will be completed within the next several months.

We are taking a comprehensive approach on this issue, and staff of my ministry are meeting with federal officials to determine what opportunities exist related to federal land holdings.

I mentioned the large land banks in Nanticoke and Cayuga within the region of Haldimand-Norfolk in southwestern Ontario and I said that OLC would not conduct a sale program that would have the effect of depressing the market in local communities. As such, the corporation has adopted a special land sale process in Nanticoke and South Cayuga which I would like to outline for the members of the committee.

The lands in Cayuga and Nanticoke are extensive, some 9,300 hectares, 23,000 acres in all. As the members will recall, these two land banks were purchased by the previous government in the late 1960s and early 1970s. At that time, there was reason to believe—I hope—that the population of southwestern Ontario would increase rapidly as a result of booming industrial development on the north shore of Lake Erie. Industrial development came, but it did not boom for a variety of reasons, most of them economic.

The growth in the Haldimand-Norfolk region has been slow over the past several years. Development began in Townsend within the city of Nanticoke, and what was eventually intended to be a town of some 40,000 residents is now a

community of 400. That is one per cent of the original estimated size.

Given the continued slow growth of the Haldimand-Norfolk region, the government does not anticipate rapid growth in Townsend, nor do we expect to see Cayuga needed for development. As a result, some of the lands in the Townsend area are surplus to the government needs and so too is virtually all the land in South Cayuga land bank.

Both these land banks are simply too large to put on the market at one time. We have to consider the interests of farmers and other property owners living in the area whose investment in their lands would suffer from the rapid sale of large land banks.

I said that OLC will not disrupt the local market nor will we sell the land below its highest and best value to the taxpayers of Ontario. However, OLC intends to sell a significant portion—up to 50 per cent—of these lands within the next five years.

I mentioned earlier that one of the criteria in the five-year accelerated land sale program was to consider the concerns of other levels of government. In the case of Nanticoke and South Cayuga, the input and assistance of local and regional officials is vital to the effectiveness of the land sale process. It must cause minimal impact on the community at large. To that end, OLC has set up two local advisory committees, one for the Nanticoke lands and one for the Cayuga lands, to co-ordinate the ideas, knowledge and responsibilities of all the agencies with an interest in the land disposition process.

Each of the two committees includes a representative from the regional municipality of Haldimand-Norfolk; local councillors; a representative from the Ministry of Government Services, which is responsible for managing the lands; and staff of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and of the local federation of agriculture, as well as staff from the Ontario Land Corp. These committees meet regularly to review the land sale process. I am confident that by involving more local representation in our sale programs, we will give full consideration to the local interests and local concerns.

All tenants currently farming the lands have been fully informed of the land sale plan and are being offered the opportunity to purchase the lands they are currently leasing. Should any tenant not wish to purchase, the current lease will be honoured.

There are two major land holdings that are not included as part of the accelerated disposition

plan: the Townsend community and the North Pickering land assembly beside the wonderful city of Scarborough.

As for Townsend, an interministerial committee was set up to review the project, and recommendations are currently being developed for consideration by cabinet. I was encouraged to see in the media that the local residents of Townsend have developed a strong sense of community spirit living in Townsend. There is no question that although the residents do not have all the shopping and educational facilities that are available in urban centres, Townsend is seen by its residents as a comfortable community for families as well as for seniors. Over the past year, a new private nonprofit housing project for families and seniors has been built in Townsend. I hope my honourable critic will observe that.

In addition, Cuddy Farms is constructing a new \$4-million poultry hatchery operation in Townsend, creating some 25 additional jobs. Also located in Townsend is a new senior citizen nonprofit building, a regional administration building and a village commercial centre. Services are also being put in for the construction of the Nanticoke municipal administration building. Things are happening there.

Although the Haldimand-Norfolk region as a whole is experiencing slower growth than had been anticipated, there are some development activities, and the Townsend community has been one of the beneficiaries.

I will now turn to the North Pickering site, which has 8,160 hectares, or 20,400 acres. The North Pickering land assembly is a special case. As such, it will be the subject of a separate review by an interministerial committee. There are several reasons for this.

First, the land assembly extends across the boundaries of three local municipalities and three regional municipalities: Markham in the region of York, Scarborough in Metro Toronto and Pickering in the region of Durham. Any plans for North Pickering must take into account the public planning process in all six local and regional governments.

Second, located immediately adjacent to Metro Toronto to the east, this land assembly has enormous investment potential. It is likely the largest single piece of undeveloped land in the greater Toronto region. It is exceptionally well serviced by GO train, Highway 401, Highway 7—which may become a major Highway 407—and it is also well serviced by the York-Durham sewer system.

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The eastern portion of the North Pickering assembly south of Highway 7 and north of Highway 401 contains 2,732 hectares or 6,750 acres of land known as Seaton that has been designated for urban development in the official plan of Durham. The western portion of the lands located between West Duffin Creek and the Little Rouge has been designated for agricultural use.

With development occurring immediately to the south in Pickering, with almost no vacant land left in Scarborough and with record urban development taking place in Markham, the lands owned by the province in North Pickering are becoming extremely valuable. As the members of this committee will appreciate, the North Pickering land assembly must be carefully examined and evaluated before any disposition plan is put in place.

I would like to discuss another major policy change affecting Ontario Mortgage Corp. In his October 1985 budget, the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) indicated that a large number of the corporation's mortgage loans were made with terms and conditions not commonly prevailing in today's market. He estimated that the province would recover \$37 million less than its outstanding advance. As a result, the recorded value of the advance was being reduced and OMC would dispose of the mortgages in a planned and businesslike manner. I will describe briefly the plan of action taken by the corporation as a result of this announcement.

As the Treasurer said, the mortgage loans were made with terms and conditions not prevailing in today's market. The mortgages were open so that mortgagors could pay off any amount of the principal at any time during the term of the mortgage with no interest penalty. As part of the sale plan, OMC first notified its mortgagors by letter of the plan to sell the mortgages. The letter explained the sales process and advised them that upon renewal their mortgage repayment and discharge conditions would be changed to make them more consistent with those offered by other mortgage-lending institutions. Once all the 13,000 mortgagors were notified, an advertisement was placed in the financial press and letters were sent to Canadian lending institutions inviting interest in the purchase of the first \$110-million package of first mortgages.

The sale process was conducted by open tender. A common briefing session was held with representatives from lending institutions that had indicated an interest in bidding on the package. The successful bidder on the first package was

Morguard Trust Co. On the second package, it was the Bank of Montreal.

We now have initiated a sale plan on the long-term mortgage portfolio that is valued at \$134 million. Letters will be sent to all 7,000 of these mortgagors to notify them of our intention to sell their mortgages. The interest rates of these mortgages are generally well below current market rates since they were lent in the early and mid-1970s as part of the provincial housing programs in effect at the time. These programs were targeted with families who otherwise might not have been able to afford a home of their own.

The interest rates on some of these mortgages are as low as eight per cent. We are aware, therefore, that they will be purchased by another lending institution only at a discount. Therefore, in fairness to our mortgagors, we have decided to offer them the first opportunity to purchase their mortgages at a discount. Should they not wish to purchase at the discounted rate, only then would their mortgages be offered through a sale plan to other mortgage lending institutions.

The Ontario Mortgage Corp. proposes to continue its mortgage sale program over the next two years. At that time it is expected that the mortgage portfolio, consisting of some \$240 million in mortgages, will be sold.

The accelerated disposition plan for Ontario Land Corp. land and the sale of OMC's mortgage portfolio have taken place in recent months. Concurrent with these two important policy changes is a major organizational change to merge the real estate wing with the accommodation group of the Ministry of Government Services.

The purpose of this merger is to provide a focus within the government for the management and disposition of provincially owned lands. The consolidation will promote greater efficiency in the management of provincial property holdings by combining the efforts of those who work in the area of government real estate. The real estate wing provides administrative support to the OLC and to its subsidiary the OMC, which administers the mortgages on the various government programs.

The accommodation group at MGS provides real estate and accommodation services for provincial ministries and agencies, including property development and management.

As part as the merger, a comprehensive strategy has been developed called the portfolio strategy. It has three objectives: first, to meet the program needs of provincial ministries; second, to support the government's social and economic

goals, especially in the area of housing; and third, to maximize provincial revenues through the sale of surplus lands wherever it is appropriate.

Robert Riggs, assistant deputy minister of real estate and chief executive officer of the Ontario Land Corp., has been appointed assistant deputy minister of the Ministry of Government Services while retaining his responsibility with the Ontario Land Corp. All I can say is that MGS knows talent when it sees talent; it took away a good civil servant. He has not been lost; he is still working with us.

An implementation steering committee is supervising the merger and is recommending structures and processes to streamline the new organization. The relocation of staff from the Ministry of Housing to the Ministry of Government Services will occur over the next 18 months.

Those are my opening remarks on this vote.

Mr. Philip: I have a few questions based on the minister's opening statement. I am not completely clear about the interrelationship now of his ministry and the Ministry of Government Services vis-à-vis the leasing of properties for government use. Would the minister clarify that? Is it my understanding that the acting Minister of Government Services (Mr. Conway) still has complete control over the leasing of properties?

Hon. Mr. Curling: There is no responsibility from MGS to the Minister of Housing. Yes, they still have responsibility for leasing.

1740

Mr. Philip: If they are doing large inventory surveys at the present time, what is the interaction between the kind of uses you would wish to apply to already owned government lands and those of the Ministry of Government Services?

Hon. Mr. Curling: If I understand the question properly, we try to use all lands to facilitate my housing program, if it can be done, for building affordable rental housing. The member asks me what is the use. If I understand his question properly, it is to make sure we can use those lands, where appropriate, to bring affordable rental housing on the market.

Mr. Philip: Where there are interlocking and overlapping uses, such as in the use or the sale of properties that are surplus, which ministry will have the lead and the chief say in those instances of surplus properties?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I have mentioned the rental housing utilization of land, which is chaired by the Deputy Minister of Housing,

Ward Cornell. It is not a matter of who will have the lead and the first say, but of how it can best be utilized; whether it should be agricultural use, whether it should be sold or whether it should be for housing. I think it will be used at the best discretion of the committee.

Mr. Philip: The minister has not answered my question. If I may I back up a step, there is an inventory right now of government properties. At some point, all of us will be able to know what properties, be they vacant land or buildings, are owned by the Ontario government. Is that not correct?

At that point, then, surely there has to be some lead ministry that decides what land is surplus, what are the criteria for selling it and what can be used for mixed purposes. It could be mixed office and residential, in which case the Ontario Housing Corp. could become involved, or it could be other forms of nonprofit use, along with government offices or other facilities.

Who acts as the lead minister to co-ordinate all of this once we have the survey done and how do you plug into that lead ministry?

Hon. Mr. Curling: The Ministry of Government Services is the lead ministry in that sense. I go back to the point I was making about the committee on the utilization of land for rental housing. We could have an input on how we could utilize those lands that are available, but the Ministry of Government Services is the lead ministry in that regard.

Mr. Philip: The auditor has been extremely critical of the way in which surplus lands are being sold by the Ministry of Government Services, by the way in which the real estate agents were chosen and, indeed, by the fact that in some instances, such as the University Avenue properties, land was sold prior to taking certain actions such as a rezoning to higher density where it would get a higher buck for the taxpayer.

What has your ministry learned from the experiences and mistakes of the Ministry of Government Services and what safeguards will you put in to ensure you will not make the same mistakes MGS has made over the years in selling off properties?

Hon. Mr. Curling: Of course, we learn from mistakes and what was pointed out in the auditor's report as a reflection on the activity within the Ministry of Government Services. The committee that is set forth here, as I mentioned in my opening remarks, will help us to be careful in the way we will go about disposing of government land and being sensitive to the community, making sure we get the best price for the

taxpayers' investment. What we saw in the auditor's comments on MGS will be a lesson to us.

Mr. Philip: These comments are so general that they are completely incomprehensible unless the minister can be more specific and give us some examples. For example, if I look at page 9 of your statement, I find one of the objectives is, "To identify and recommend provincial lands that could be developed for Ministry of Housing programs." Further down, one of your objectives is to market them. How do you develop them for your own housing programs and then market them at the same time? It seems that one is a function of selling off surplus property; that is the exact opposite to the development of properties for residential housing.

Hon. Mr. Curling: I do not see a contradiction in it. My responsibility as Minister of Housing is to see that our assured housing policy brings affordable housing to the people of Ontario. Where it can be used with our land to bring that to a specific target area, we will do so. Where we can identify land or prepare land for selling by going through the normal planning process, whether through the commercial sector or the industrial sector, we will dispose of it accordingly. A community is redeveloped by recognizing all its facets, industrial, commercial and residential.

Mr. Philip: When I hear the minister read through this statement and when I see the statements of the various Ministers of Government Services, I get a strange feeling of déjà vu concerning the government's so-called policy—and I am more than dignifying it by calling it that—on crown corporations. What the minister is really doing is taking an inventory so he can see what he can sell off. That is the limit of his policy.

What are the minister's criteria for selling off property? Can he give me some specific criteria he uses other than the reduction of the provincial debt or the production of revenue? Can he give me some assurance that he is not playing the same game his government is playing with crown corporations, namely, selling off anything that looks like a winner, such as the Urban Transportation Development Corp., or anything that is saleable, even at a loss, such as Minaki Lodge, which should have been sold years ago and is at last being sold or given away or whatever? He has no policy other than to sell off as much as possible. What are the criteria for selling off the property?

Hon. Mr. Curling: That is not a fair criticism. The land we sold in Windsor, land I mentioned in my remarks about the Toyota company in Cambridge, was for commercial use. We can see what such a development will do for jobs and development in a community. To say it is just a question of disposal without a strategy is rather unfair. There are examples in Cambridge, Windsor and Cobourg—I can give the member some more names if he wants. My staff can tell him of other areas we have used in a different manner.

Mr. Philip: Is the minister suggesting he has an industrial policy based on his land use policy that he can actually identify, that he can table for us and present to us here so we can understand it, rather than the generalizations and slogans he is throwing around this afternoon?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I mentioned Toyota. I do not think that was general, but specific. I have named some places where we have used land in a different manner rather than selling it off for selling's sake. The member asks whether I have an industrial strategy. I do not have an industrial strategy.

Mr. Philip: That is fairly obvious. Neither does the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr. O'Neil); so this minister is not alone.

Can the minister tell us about the sale of these mortgages? What safeguards has he put into the sale of the mortgages for those persons whom other mortgage companies and private mortgage lenders might consider risky? They might not be risky at the lower interest rate when they were able to obtain these homes with these mortgages, but risky in this economic climate or with a higher interest rate. What is the minister doing to safeguard these people so that as a result of the sale of the mortgages, they will not be placed in a position where they may lose their homes under the new lenders or indeed that the new lenders may not wish to look at them when the mortgages come up for renewal?

1750

Hon. Mr. Curling: The long-term mortgages are fixed. That safeguard is put in there. When people who were purchasing the mortgages or who had mortgages with us went over to the other mortgage company—these mortgages are for 30 or 35 years. I think that is quite a good safeguard, that they are buying mortgages for that duration.

Mr. Philip: People who participated in the home ownership made easy program have come to me and informed me that the Ontario Mortgage

Corp. mortgages were sold off, that they had to negotiate with a private lender because the term of the mortgages was such that the renewals had to be agreed on by the private lender, that the private lender made life very difficult for them and that they had to negotiate the renewals. Is the minister saying that this is not the case, that this cannot happen?

Hon. Mr. Curling: Before the mortgages were sold, the people were given the opportunity to buy them at a discounted rate. There are two types of mortgages. I think the renewals are for two years. I will get back to the member in a second. Let me get a proper answer.

We guaranteed the short-term mortgages that were renewed for up to five years. The people buying or renewing those mortgages are protected for five years. I hope that will answer the question the member asked me about what protections are being given to the people buying those mortgages. They renewed on the normal basis and were protected, and then sold.

Mr. Philip: Is the minister telling me no one at this time has to negotiate with a private mortgage holder, be it a corporation or a person, who may not be wishing to renew an OMC mortgage or who may be giving the mortgagee some difficulty because of his present financial situation? Is the minister assuring me I will not be able to produce one, two or 10 cases of people in that situation?

Hon. Mr. Curling: Can the member specify whether he is speaking about a long-term or short-term mortgage?

Mr. Philip: As I understand it, some of the mortgages sold are long-term mortgages and others are short-term mortgages. Obviously, the purpose of the short-term mortgages was to help some people of less affluent means than the minister get into home ownership. That was part of the rationale of the previous government. Is the minister telling me that on at least the short-term mortgages, nobody is facing any difficulty with the private lenders in getting those renewed on the completion of the short term?

Hon. Mr. Curling: As far as I know, we have never had any complaint, and I have not had any cases that are having difficulty that way.

Mr. Philip: I will check my records, but I am pretty sure I have sent the minister a complaint on it.

Since this land banking has been done, is it possible for all MPPs to receive, either from the minister or from the Ministry of Government Services, a list of all land that is available for

either rental or sale and the dates on which these are expected to be put on the block?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I could give the member data on all except Pickering. As I have been explaining, Pickering is a special case and I could not give him dates on all those lands that have been sold or rented.

Mr. Philip: Notwithstanding Pickering, let me be specific: if I, as the MPP for Etobicoke, asked the minister for an inventory of all government lands that are going to be either leased or sold in my riding, could it be obtained from him or from the Minister of Government Services?

Hon. Mr. Curling: What can be given to the member is the lands that are available, between me as Minister of Housing and the Minister of Government Services, and declared surplus.

Mr. Philip: Those shown as available would include the designation of whether it was the preference to rent or sell them, I presume. Concerning the minister's statement that he plans to work with regional municipalities, do I take it he has already supplied such lists to every municipality in the province so that, according to the Manual of Administration, the municipalities would have first option, after another provincial government agency, to have first bid on those properties?

Hon. Mr. Curling: It is an ongoing process of consultation. Constant advice and information will be given to the municipalities.

Mr. Chairman: Excuse me. I should draw the members' attention to the clock. Perhaps we can continue next day.

Mr. Philip: Perhaps I can finish this one topic, because it is important. In the past, municipalities such as the city of Etobicoke have expressed

grave concern that they have not even been informed when land was being sold and had no opportunity to exercise their option or their right under the Manual of Administration of first refusal after another government ministry.

What is the minister doing to ensure that each municipality knows what lands are available? Could I go to the city of Etobicoke today or tomorrow and have a list of all lands the minister is contemplating selling or leasing?

Mr. Chairman: Perhaps the minister would save his answer for next day. The question is in Hansard. It is time for the committee to rise.

On motion by Hon. Mr. Curling, the committee of supply reported progress.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon. Mr. Curling: I would like to indicate the business of the House for the following week.

On Monday, January 19, and Thursday, January 22, in the afternoon, we will consider the estimates of the Ministry of Housing.

On Tuesday and Wednesday, January 19 and 21, we will deal with the following legislation: Bill 150, truck transportation; Bill 151, Ontario Highway Transportation Board; Bill 152, Highway Traffic Amendment Act, divisions to be stacked to 5:45 p.m.; Bill 139, model law; Bill 90, police complaints; Bill 161, courts of justice; Bill 127, Surveyors Act; Bill 186, election finances; second and third reading of Bill Pr7.

On Thursday morning, January 22, we will consider private member's business standing in the names of the member for Humber (Mr. Henderson) and the member for Etobicoke (Mr. Philip).

The House adjourned at 6:03 p.m.

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Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 33rd Parliament
Monday, January 19, 1987

Speaker: Honourable H. A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday, January 19, 1987

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY

Mr. Shymko: Today black communities throughout North America are celebrating a commemorative holiday, namely, Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Communities throughout Ontario are involved in various activities for this special commemoration. I introduced last week a private member's bill entitled An Act to proclaim Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

I would remind the honourable members that the co-citizens of Martin Luther King Jr., slain for the cause of human and civil rights, on August 2, 1983, passed a bill to commemorate the memory of Martin Luther King Jr.

Senator Kennedy said, "What we need, what this bill gives us, is a chance to manifest for our whole country its love and wisdom and compassion towards one another." Congress Speaker Tip O'Neill said: "Martin Luther King Jr. changed American society. He changed it, not by force of arms, but by a moral force." Congressman Jack Kemp, referring to his governing party, said, "If we turn our backs, we are not going to be the party of human dignity we want to be known for."

I ask my colleagues and the House leaders, let us pass this bill today with unanimous consent.

PLANT SHUTDOWN

Mr. Breagh: Yesterday morning at the Canadian Automobile Workers' hall in Oshawa, approximately 400 people gathered to express support for the people at Cadbury Schweppes who are losing their jobs because of a plant closure. Representatives of Newcastle, Whitby, Oshawa, Durham region, the Canadian Automobile Workers, the Oshawa and District Labour Council and a number of other trade unions in the area expressed their support.

I invite the government today to join with all of us in the whole region of Durham who are expressing our dismay at the Neilson company's takeover of the Cadbury Schweppes plant and its announced intention to close a modern, produc-

tive facility. There is no reason any of us can see at any level for this corporate takeover, except to buy out their competition.

Many of us have begun the process of appealing to the Canadian Competition Tribunal. I invite the government today to join with us in the Durham region in protesting the closure of that plant facility and in trying to protect those jobs.

I want to read briefly from the telegram that was sent from Bob Nickerson, national secretary-treasurer of the Canadian Automobile Workers:

"The only reason that the new owners are buying Cadbury is to increase their market share by eliminating a competitor. Time and again we are seeing companies buy, take over or merge other companies, not in the interests of creating jobs, increasing research and development or expanding products but in the interests of maximizing profits or increasing their market power in a given industry."

RECOGNITION OF CITIZENS

Mr. G. I. Miller: I want to take this opportunity today to acknowledge the contribution made by two outstanding citizens of the town of Simcoe, Colonel Douglas Stalker and John Malo. They were honoured recently with the presentation of the Award of Merit by the mayor, Jim Earl.

Colonel Stalker, a lifelong resident of Simcoe, has served his community for the past 62 years in many capacities. He was the Norfolk-Elgin returning officer in 1925. Colonel Stalker has fought in both world wars, commanding the 45th Field Regiment from 1941 to 1945.

John Malo, a tobacco farmer and three-time world champion tobacco grower, has served the town of Simcoe in various capacities. He was president of the Norfolk County Fair and president of the Norfolk Association for the Mentally Retarded. He served with the Eva Brook Donly Museum and helped with many fund-raising events, particularly within the Norfolk General Hospital.

Time does not permit me to do proper justice to these two outstanding individuals. They are

leaders by example and, in my opinion, worthy of our heartiest congratulations.

RENTAL ACCOMMODATION

Mr. Jackson: More than a year ago, the Minister of Housing (Mr. Curling) announced that under his leadership the province would be taking a new direction in housing. He told us he would be bringing certainty back into all elements of the housing market.

The people of Burlington today can tell the minister he has succeeded in bringing certainty into the housing market beyond their wildest nightmares, because today it is certain that one cannot find a single vacant apartment in Burlington. The minister's new direction in housing has taken Burlington's vacancy rate down to zero. The latest Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp. report on vacancy rates, reported Wednesday in the Burlington Spectator, says it all:

"For the first time in its history, the city's apartment vacancy rate hit zero at the time of the CMHC survey. None of the city's apartments were available for rent on the day of the survey."

I have risen repeatedly in this Legislature to warn the minister that there was a genuine housing crisis in Burlington. I have written the minister, and a delegation from Burlington joined me at Queen's Park to meet with the minister. We have had to do this because, outside of one Renterprise proposal, not a single application has been approved for development in Burlington. As the housing analyst for CMHC said: "There is not an awful lot to say. It couldn't be any worse."

I will send the minister a copy of this article and hope he will keep it with him when he is discussing applications for Project 3000, when he is reviewing the new allocations for nonprofit housing and when he is looking at Renterprise allocations. We cannot live in all the paper houses announced over the past year and a half. We need rental housing in Burlington, and we needed it months ago.

RENT REVIEW

Mr. Reville: Here comes William Grenier in the Saturday Star, thinking out loud. Mr. Grenier is an efficient man. He runs the Pagebrook Group, he runs the Fair Rental Policy Organization of Ontario, he runs the rent review division of the Ministry of Housing and he still finds time to run a cheering section for the Premier (Mr. Peterson).

"David Peterson," he speculates, "is the one politician who just might have the guts to do it."

What will he do? He will phase out rent controls, of course. How will he do it? I quote the Saturday Star: "Premier Peterson, who is enjoying unprecedented popularity, calls an election soon, wins a majority and then returns to Queen's Park without any need for a deal with the NDP."

Mr. Grenier knows how Liberals do things. The Premier, according to our landlord-cum-prophet, establishes an all-party group to study how to phase out rent controls and phase in shelter allowance. Could it be true?

Mr. Grenier got Progressive Conservatives over to a meeting of the Fair Rental Policy folks, and the member for St. Andrew-St. Patrick (Mr. Grossman) said breezily that he favoured an end to rent control. Mind you, the member for St. Andrew-St. Patrick might be a bit piqued because, after he sang for his supper, Mr. Grenier gave all the bouquets to the Premier. I want Mr. Grenier to know that the New Democratic Party is not coming to dinner. We do not favour an end to rent control and we too wonder whether the Premier has the guts to do it.

1340

ONTARIO FRUIT AND VEGETABLE GROWERS' ASSOCIATION

Mr. McGuigan: The oldest agricultural organization in Ontario is the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association. This association is holding its annual convention at the Westin Hotel in Toronto on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of this week. It is the 128th year of the association's existence.

The association has earned the reputation of working hard to advance horticultural science in Ontario and to represent the business interests of the fruit, vegetable and flower producers of the province. The association joins with associations from other provinces in Canada as a member of the Canadian Horticultural Council.

The association has always fought for adequate tariff protection against most of the United States produce dumped into the Ontario market at the end of the US production season, which quite often coincides with the beginning of our production season. During the last round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, which concluded in 1977, the Tokyo round, seasonal protection was negotiated. That breathed life back into the industry. During our short production season, effective rates were secured in exchange for zero tariff during our off-season. The association is naturally very concerned about the outcome of the so-called free trade discussions that are currently taking place. Any

diminution of the present tariff levels will likely prove disastrous to the industry.

The association works with the Ontario government to secure laws to govern the grading of both domestic and imported produce through its affiliation with the Canadian Horticultural Council.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Davis: Freedom is a right that must constantly be defended. All of us in this Legislature take pride in Ontario's record as a leader in defending individual rights and in fighting discrimination.

Scenes such as the ones we saw on the weekend television, where freedom marchers in a community in Georgia were attacked because of the colour of their skin, are unthinkable in Ontario. Those scenes are unthinkable because Ontario has enjoyed courageous leadership in human rights. We have had leaders who were willing to make the tough decisions.

Mr. Speaker: The member's time has expired.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY

Hon. Ms. Munro: I have just come from the opening ceremonies of Martinsday, an all-day event at Harbourfront. It is a day of commemoration of the life and work of Martin Luther King Jr. I was there representing the Premier (Mr. Peterson) and the government of Ontario.

As we all know, Martin Luther King Jr. was a very special human being. His thinking was universal. His beliefs, actions and words were so powerful that they sliced through all sections of society. They affected people everywhere regardless of race, religion or socioeconomic standing.

Without a doubt, Martin Luther King Jr.'s devotion to human rights changed the world. As I said at the event, I think he would approve of the way we have done things in Ontario. He would see problems, but by and large, we have come a long way towards reaching his vision for society.

January 15 would have been Martin Luther King Jr.'s 58th birthday had his life not ended so tragically and so early. Taking time to remember such a great man and to take stock of where we are now in relation to his dream is very worth while. As the minister responsible for multiculturalism in Ontario, I take this opportunity to invite my colleagues in the House to renew their commitment to strive towards attaining a totally just and harmonious multicultural Ontario. To-

gether, I know we can make Martin Luther King Jr.'s dream a reality.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I wish to update the members of this Legislature on our continuing efforts to resolve the immediate automobile insurance problems faced by many consumers.

As members may know, approximately 1.3 per cent of private passenger automobile insurance policies are written through the Facility Association. The Facility Association was established by the Compulsory Automobile Insurance Act to provide automobile insurance for otherwise uninsurable risks. Traditionally, the Facility Association has been used by drivers who have a record of Highway Traffic Act or driving-related Criminal Code convictions.

In recent years, with the reduction in overall insurance capacity, a number of drivers have been referred to the Facility Association who properly should have been insured by the private market. In addition, many of these drivers are unaware that they are in the Facility Association, where the highest premiums are charged.

For many months, the office of the superintendent of insurance has had numerous discussions with the Facility Association, insurance companies and insurance brokers regarding these matters.

I wish to outline steps this government has taken in conjunction with these groups for the purposes of reducing the rates to drivers who use the Facility Association and reducing the number of drivers who are required to utilize the Facility Association.

They are as follows:

Insurance brokers have agreed to a cap on their commissions at the level of \$150. Previously, brokers' commissions were based on a flat percentage, which in some cases could have been in excess of \$1,000.

Many of the drivers now in the Facility have been referred there because of ineffective brokering by their agents. In future, an agent cannot represent the Facility Association exclusively, but must represent at least one other insurance company. Good rates are available in the marketplace but they can only be found by effective brokering. Also, in future all drivers must be informed that they are in the Facility Association so that if they are dissatisfied they have the option of brokering elsewhere. This information will be displayed on the front of all policies.

The members of the Facility Association have agreed to an incentive program that will increase the levy on those insurance companies that rely excessively on the Facility Association to handle hard-to-insure risks. This will encourage insurance companies to keep many of these risks, especially young drivers with good records, in the private market at substantially lower premium costs.

Finally, last November, the Facility Association agreed to withdraw its application for premium rate increases that averaged in excess of 20 per cent. As a result, there will be no change in Facility Association premium rates. The Facility Association continues to operate at a loss and is subsidized by individual insurance companies.

These changes will result in overall significant reductions in the premium rates charged by the Facility Association and the number of drivers who are referred to that association.

SOIL CONSERVATION

Hon. Mr. Riddell: As the members know, soil conservation is a matter of growing importance in the province and a priority issue at the Ministry of Agriculture and Food.

The members may remember that I have spoken of the ravages of soil erosion in Ontario costing us about \$70 million a year in lost agricultural productivity. We have assigned more of our resources at the ministry to the task of encouraging greater farmer participation in soil conservation practices to curb this erosion.

I am therefore pleased to inform the members of two new programs in this area. The Ontario soil conservation and environmental protection assistance program, or OSCEPAP for short, has been improved to encourage farmers to build more erosion control and manure storage facilities. The new four-year, \$22-million program, to be known as OSCEPAP II, is effective from last April. It offers farmers increased grants to cover a major portion of the costs on a large number of soil erosion and pollution control devices.

Second, the Ministry of the Environment is enhancing OSCEPAP II by a further \$4 million over four years to reduce runoff of farm animal pollution into rural streams, rivers and lakes in designated areas of the province. I am very grateful that my colleague the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) is helping us in this effort. His ministry's assistance to this program will be of great benefit to the producers of this province.

With the enrichments from both parts of this new program, up to \$12,500, or 40 per cent, of

the total cost of manure storage and associated structures will now be covered. In addition, grants for erosion control devices and water quality improvement will pay a maximum 75 per cent or \$14,500.

Improved OSCEPAP assistance applies to a variety of added items under the program such as trenches for milkhouse washwater waste, pesticide handling and protective tree planting and grass cover.

1350

OSCEPAP II is available to all farmers in Ontario. In southwestern Ontario, it is part of the federal-provincial soil and water environmental enhancement program, or SWEEP, announced last year to improve soil and water quality in that area.

We can look forward to widespread benefits under the new Ontario soil conservation and environmental protection program with the added enhancement from the Ministry of the Environment.

OSCEPAP II will help to control soil erosion, maintain crop productivity and protect our water resources. These improvements will make for a more productive agricultural sector and cleaner water habitat in the province.

RESPONSES

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr. Ashe: I have a brief response to the statement by the Minister of Financial Institutions (Mr. Kwinter) regarding the Facility Association. First, when credit is due, we always want to give it from this side. I congratulate the minister, particularly on the four points that were made. However—and he knew this was coming—I find suspect the reference to approximately 1.3 per cent of the private passenger automobile insurance policies that supposedly are currently written through the association.

I hope that he feels confident in his own mind that that is a current number, because I think he will find—and he makes reference to it, frankly—that the numbers that have been put through the Facility Association in the past number of years have grown in leaps and bounds. Judging from the kinds of contacts that I am sure we all get as members through our constituency offices, there are more and more people who are concerned. I find it very difficult to comprehend that it is only 1.3 per cent.

If there is one general overall criticism, it is the fact that it took so long to get this far. If members will recall, we had the same issue on the general liability question that we raised about a year or so

before this government did anything about it. All I can say on this is that it is better late than never.

SOIL CONSERVATION

Mr. Stevenson: The expansion of the Ontario soil conservation and environmental protection assistance program is welcomed. That was a program that our previous government started. It was a plan to which we had planned to increase the funding. We mentioned in a number of our releases that it needed some expansion in the light of some of the situations that farmers are experiencing today.

What commitment does the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) have to erosion control and cleanup of our waters? A specific example is the situation in Lake Simcoe where agricultural runoff is now the leading source of phosphorus in that lake. The strategy committee for Lake Simcoe gave its recommendations to the minister in October 1985. It is now some 16 months later, and there is still no submission to cabinet.

The minister who is in charge, the Minister of the Environment, is Vice-Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet, and the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio) is on that committee. They head the two lead ministries working on Lake Simcoe and, after that length of time, one would think they would at least have a submission to cabinet. If they do not believe it is a priority, they could at least hide it by bringing forward a submission and then dumping on it once they get it to cabinet. When there has not been even a word in more than 16 months, I wonder what priority this government, other than the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, has on erosion, erosion control and the health of our lakes and many of our most prominent natural resources.

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY

Mr. Shymko: I welcome the remarks of the Minister of Citizenship and Culture (Ms. Munro) on Martinsday. She invited all of us members to renew our commitment to strive towards obtaining a totally just and harmonious multicultural society on this day.

There is no better way to show this renewal and this commitment than by inviting the minister herself, the Premier (Mr. Peterson), the House leader and all of us to show this commitment in a concrete way by unanimously passing a bill to declare a commemorative public holiday.

If we are to make Martin Luther King Jr. Day a reality, as the minister says, we will be much closer to that reality by making such a unanimous decision today. Let Ontario continue to provide leadership towards the elimination of hatred, bigotry, inequities and injustices, as we have in the past and of which we are so proud, as the minister said. This would be a concrete way. Just as we respect Martin Luther King Jr. not for his words but for his deeds, let us be respected not for empty phrases but for our deeds. I appeal to the minister and to all our House leaders to proclaim Martin Luther King Jr. Day in Ontario in a definite, concrete way.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: "I have a dream." Those words in that magical speech have lived with most members of this House through the many years since the death of Martin Luther King Jr. Every time we watch a newscast from South Africa, or this Sunday stories from the southern United States, and understand that institutionalized racism is still rampant in this world, or that from time to time even the more insidious and unseemly kinds of racism in our society show themselves, in jokes and in other fashions that are inappropriate, we realize how important his message is.

I am very pleased the minister has recognized Martin Luther King Jr. Day. I approached her a number of months ago to provide some financial support to the celebration today, and I am glad that money has come through. The links between our black community and those in the US are deep and profound and go all the way back to the days of the underground railroad.

It is very important for us to recognize the importance of that day in the US, but in contrast to the member for High Park-Swansea (Mr. Shymko), I suggest that, rather than making it a holiday in this province, there are many practical, down-to-earth things we can do to make the lives of the members of our black community much easier in this society—to make it easier for its young people to get jobs and to make it easier to help some who have come here with problems of illiteracy overcome those problems—than to name a day in memory of Martin Luther King Jr. I suggest he would prefer concrete action as well.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr. Swart: I would like to reply to the statement by the Minister of Financial Institutions (Mr. Kwinter). First, in summary of that statement, it is simply an admission that many people have been forced to go to the Facility Association who should not have had to go. That

is a massive condemnation of his ministry and the insurance companies, because they are the ones that set up and operate the Facility Association.

Also, it is simply not true that, to quote the minister, "Good rates are available in the marketplace for hard-to-insure drivers." They are not. Perhaps he thinks a \$2,000 insurance rate is a good rate. I want him to know the motorists of this province do not think that is the case. This is nothing more than a Band-Aid approach. He says it will help those hard-to-insure good young drivers. It may decrease the cost to good young drivers so that they only have to pay three times as much as the good older drivers, instead of four times as much.

Why does the minister not use the power he has to prevent anyone from being forced to go to the Facility Association and pay those kinds of rates unless they are guilty of bad driving? He can set up a schedule. It would have to be proven that they were guilty of bad driving. There is a simple way. Why does the minister not pass legislation to relate premiums to driving records and to nothing else, so that only people who are proven to be bad drivers have to pay those extra rates?

The insurance companies, as the minister well knows and as has now been confirmed, have record profits. The casualty and property insurers in Canada have made more money in the first nine months of 1986 than they did in any whole year in their history before. If the minister were concerned about the motorists of this province instead of the insurance companies, he would pass legislation to force them to charge the same rate for all good drivers, regardless of age.

1400

SOIL CONSERVATION

Mr. Hayes: I wish to respond to the statement made by the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr. Riddell) dealing with the Ontario soil conservation and environmental protection program. I welcome this announcement and I am sure the farmers across this province will also welcome it. Soil erosion in the rural areas has been a serious problem for a long, long time. Not only has it taken away some of the soil from the farm industry, but it also affects the environment and the quality of our water, which we are very concerned about. I hope this program becomes successful.

ORAL QUESTIONS

ACQUIRED IMMUNE DEFICIENCY SYNDROME

Mr. Andrewes: My question is to the Minister of Health. Can the minister update us on the

commitments his ministry and his government have made for the support of education and support programs to curb the spread of the acquired immune deficiency syndrome virus?

Hon. Mr. Elston: We have done several things during the past several months with respect to the AIDS virus. The information that is available to the public has been greatly enhanced by the work of a group called the Ontario Public Education Panel on AIDS, about which an announcement was made in this House some time ago, and by the assistance of the Advisory Committee on AIDS, which is a technical advisory group that not only assists me directly but also helps in developing information for the purposes of assisting the development of worksheets, videos and other information as well as in setting up a speakers' bureau to assist any public body in receiving appropriate and timely information on the AIDS virus.

In addition to that, we have received contacts from several community organizations, and we have a very sound financial working relationship now, as I understand it, with the AIDS Committee of Toronto. I am looking at the opportunities that exist with respect to any communities that have formed similar types of organizations.

Mr. Andrewes: I remind the minister that ACT is one of eight groups, as I understand it, that are now looking for funding from his ministry to carry on support and information programs.

I remind the minister that in Britain, where the incidence of AIDS per capita is one quarter of what it is in Canada, they have committed \$40 million to a campaign. The disease is spreading at an alarming rate. There is no known cure. Education and support are the one positive direction the minister can go in to curb the spread of this virus. Does he not think his commitment pales in the light of what is going on in other jurisdictions?

Hon. Mr. Elston: With respect to what is going on in this jurisdiction, we have done quite well indeed. In fact, our information packages, which have been sent to the federal government as well as to the other provinces and territories in Canada, have been well accepted as very vital and leading information packages in the nation of Canada.

With respect to what the member indicated earlier about there being eight community organizations, I am very well aware of them. I just indicated that ACT was the first one with which we had developed financial links. There are other opportunities, of course, to pursue

contacts with community-based groups for providing educational material.

With respect to the member's comparison of Ontario with the nation of Britain, I commend to his attention the fact that the Honourable Jake Epp has indicated he is quite concerned about this item as well. There is every indication that the national government should take a leading role across Canada, as did the central government in Britain. I would like it to provide an overall program of financial support that would assist us in being even more aggressive in providing information to the public. That being the case, any increased work on its part in terms of financial commitment would run—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Final supplementary.

Mr. Andrewes: I did not quite hear the end of the minister's response, Mr. Speaker, but I assume it was going to be helpful to me in posing my supplementary.

The federal government has committed 10 per cent or about \$700,000 towards a \$7-million program for AIDS education. Out of a \$10-billion budget, this government is currently funding something in excess of \$200,000 to the AIDS Committee of Toronto for AIDS education. There are 743 cases of AIDS in Canada; 284 of those cases are in Ontario. Of those, 350 victims are alive, and 142 of those living victims are in Ontario. As of October 15, 1986, 198 AIDS cases are known in Toronto alone, and 91 of those victims are alive.

A recent report of the Metropolitan Toronto District Health Council called for increased expenditures of up to \$3 million on education. The cases of AIDS are doubling nearly every month.

Mr. Speaker: Question, please.

Mr. Andrewes: Where is the government's sense of commitment to public health in Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Elston: The honourable gentleman would not want to confuse items. We do have a \$10-billion budget here, but not all of that is associated with AIDS. That gives us all our budget. The member would not want to compare a \$200,000 expenditure to the entire budget of the province, when we have a commitment of about \$5 billion of that to hospitals and other supervised services for people who are ill. We have a financial commitment to home care, which provides services to people who are ill. We have a financial commitment to the public health units, which provide educational materials and which have close contact with educating the people in local areas. There are a lot of areas in

which there are indirect commitments of funding to those patients who may have contracted AIDS. We have an indirect allocation of funds through the public health units, from which comes a great deal of information as well.

The \$200,000 is one item to one community organization. It indicates a very high level of commitment from this government. In fact, it is a much higher level of commitment than that sustained by the federal government to the same organization.

As well, we continue to put money into AIDS research. We have also continued to put money into OPEPA to provide us with more information. I can tell the honourable gentleman that our commitment is not just \$200,000, as he would have liked the public to believe. In fact, we are doing a very good job of putting public education and information in front of the people of Ontario.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

PAPER MILL

Mr. Stevenson: I have a question for the Minister of the Environment. It is the 11th hour on the control order on Kimberly-Clark, and the minister has been ineffective in dealing with that problem. What is the Premier (Mr. Peterson) now telling the minister to do? What action is he telling him to take against Kimberly-Clark?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: As the member is aware, this matter has been under discussion for some time. Officials of the Ministry of the Environment have been in discussion with people in Terrace Bay, representatives of both the company and the community. A number of matters have been the subject of discussion as it relates to the control order. We want to ensure that the control order is in place and that it is a very effective one. At the same time, we want to ensure that it is capable of being implemented and that it is going to reach the goals that the Ministry of the Environment desires.

Mr. Stevenson: On many occasions, the minister has stood in this House and pompously demanded that the American Treasury start paying for part of the cleanup in the United States. To clean up acid rain here in Ontario he has promised an environmental superfund. He has the \$1 billion in excess revenue coming into his treasury this year. Why has he not come forward with the same type of funding to stop Kimberly-Clark from dumping acid and other toxic chemicals into Lake Superior?

1410

Hon. Mr. Bradley: Since the member makes reference to the acid rain program, he will be

aware of the assistance program the federal government, in conjunction with the provincial government, has available with regard to the implementation of the acid rain program. That was announced some time ago by the federal and provincial governments.

The member may recall that I was in Ottawa meeting with the federal minister in regard to that. There was an agreement that a substantial sum of money would be available if the one sintering plant and two smelters that are being regulated could prove to the federal and provincial governments that the money was indeed required. That could be part of this program to reduce the acid rain emissions of the four major polluters by 66 per cent or 67 per cent by 1994.

As always in these matters, we take everything into consideration and all options are being looked at.

Mr. Stevenson: That response had absolutely nothing to do with Kimberly-Clark. The minister is very well known for his verbal spills in this House. I have here one of the very good products made by Kimberly-Clark, but I would not hazard a guess on which part of the minister's anatomy he should put it.

We estimate that the Ontario government makes about \$3 million a year from the sale of Huggies diapers alone. That is not to say anything about facial tissues or the many other good products Kimberly-Clark makes. Why has the minister not put some of this money into financial assistance for this company to solve this very serious environmental and social problem?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: As a defender of the free enterprise system—

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Response?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I am trying to respond, but my friend will not let me. The member for Cochrane North (Mr. Fontaine) was interjecting.

The member opposite is a member of a party that believes in the free enterprise system. He would want to ensure, if at all possible, that the costs of applying environmental controls are borne by those who are in business in the province. He would know that, on an almost weekly basis, the Minister of the Environment and the government are faced with people who say they are unable to provide their own funds to meet their environmental obligations. In the overwhelming number of cases, that is so.

We want to be assured that there is a genuine case of need. As I indicated to my friend the member for Durham-York (Mr. Stevenson), we

are evaluating all options and have been for some time in this regard.

ACQUIRED IMMUNE DEFICIENCY SYNDROME

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I have a question of the Minister of Health. It is on the same issue raised by the Conservative critic for health issues. We appreciate the fact that the minister finally came through over the holidays with additional funding for the AIDS Committee of Toronto after that group had to go public and almost had to close its doors a few months ago because of lack of appropriate funding from this government. We appreciate that the government finally saw the light at the last minute and came through to fund the group.

Will the minister take the next appropriate step and fund Casey House, which is a proposal for a hospice in Toronto that would provide community-based services and should be funded by the ministry on the same basis as hospitals are funded in this province, on a two-thirds/one-third basis for capital? Is the minister prepared to announce that funding today?

Hon. Mr. Elston: It would be reasonable for the honourable gentleman to recognize that we have had a long association with the AIDS Committee of Toronto. One of the reasons for the need for extra funding was the fact that federal government funding was not forthcoming. We had to review their budget on the basis of submissions that required much more detail than we had originally received.

There were some difficulties as well evidenced in those analyses by indications that there had been some additional staff, which we had not seen in the original application. We had a lot of work to do. The member's version of the manner in which the funding was provided is not completely the way in which it occurred. We have become aware recently of the hospice proposal. It has become formal to our ministry. We are examining it. However, I am not in a position at this time to indicate that we will be funding it.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: Is the minister aware that this group has a very good proposal philosophically as well as the type of care? Economically, it is a terrific proposal, because it is cheaper to provide service in a hospice than in a hospital. Is the minister prepared to say that he will consider this proposal on the basis of hospital funding, in other words, the two-thirds, one-third funding proposal, as capital is provided in the hospital sector? Is he prepared to look at it on that basis?

Hon. Mr. Elston: I am not prepared to examine it from any particular point of view. We are examining the proposal as it has been presented to us. We will examine it from that standpoint. I can tell the member that with respect to capital funding for hospital purposes, we already have a very ambitious \$650-million program, which I am analysing now, with respect to the addition of chronic and acute care beds. That capital funding program now is in detail and at an ongoing stage. I am not prepared to include the hospice program in that capital plan.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: If the minister is not prepared to make a statement today on the hospice, is he prepared to indicate what his plan will be with respect to the funding of the other AIDS committees throughout Ontario? This problem started at the beginning of the 1980s. It is now 1987. The only thing of any substance at all that this ministry has done has been to fund ACT. That is a pretty weak-kneed approach to a major public health issue in the entire province.

Hon. Mr. Elston: The member is not correct as to the material he provides to the public of this province. ACT is one particular community organization that we have sponsored. We have provided the Ontario Public Education Panel on AIDS and it has provided very good material. The member shakes his head, but he must know the membership of that panel includes representatives from ACT. Included as well with the OPEPA group is the co-ordinating group with respect to technical information of the advisory committee, which also includes representatives.

We have not only provided information from that source and funding for those people to do the information required by the public, but we have also provided material or at least financial support for people who are doing research on this problem in the province.

In addition to that, we have provided AIDS sufferers in this province with support either in hospitals or through home care programs, and we are looking at ways to assist those people as they progress in need for treatment of their disease. For the gentleman to say that we have only funded ACT is not reflected in the facts.

TRANSPORTATION OF TRITIUM

Mrs. Grier: I have a question for the Minister of the Environment about the transportation of tritium.

An hon. member: Oh, oh.

Mrs. Grier: Yes, I did not think he would be ready for that one, but that is what I would like to ask him about first today.

Last December, I asked the Minister of Energy (Mr. Kerrio) for his opinion as to whether the risk involved in moving tritium around the province justified Ontario Hydro's refusal to build tritium removal plants at Bruce and Pickering. Can the Minister of the Environment tell us whether he agrees with Hydro's position that it is appropriate to move this very dangerous material around the highways of the province and through Metropolitan Toronto?

1420

Hon. Mr. Bradley: As the honourable member will be aware, in dealing with the federal authority which had specific responsibility for radioactive waste, Ontario Hydro made certain undertakings to satisfy that authority there was indeed not a major problem to be encountered in this regard. However, it is my understanding from reports I read in the press today that there have been further discussions between the Atomic Energy Control Board and Ontario Hydro which have changed those procedures to a certain extent.

I will be discussing this matter with my colleague the Minister of Energy, who has responsibility for Hydro, to see what those changes have been, because we want to ensure that any transportation that takes place will be done in the safest possible manner.

Mrs. Grier: I am disappointed that the minister has not had discussions about the question with the Minister of Energy long before this, because the question has certainly been raised in this House with both ministers on many occasions.

I remind the Minister of the Environment that on October 22, when I asked him about the transportation of tritium, he said he was exploring the possibility of public hearings. On October 28, when I asked the Minister of Energy whether he would agree to an environmental assessment into this question, he said I should put the question to the Minister of the Environment.

Now that the Minister of the Environment has been handed a note, perhaps he can tell me whether he agrees that if the public is assuming the risks of this transportation, the public should have some input into whether the tritium should be transported. Will the Minister of the Environment have a public environmental assessment into the transportation of tritium across this province?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I indicated to the member at the time that the matter was under consideration. She will also know that the federal Department of Transport is responsible for the

Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act, so it also has a rather significant role to play in this. She will know that the act was revised in the not-too-distant past to reflect some of the problems that had arisen in the past. However, with the discussions that will take place with the Minister of Energy, the federal Department of Transport and the Atomic Energy Control Board—and I am happy to participate in those—I think we can come to a reasonable resolution to the matter.

I think all of us in this House share the concerns that have been expressed by some in the community and the knowledge that is required to assure people that any transportation that takes place will be in the safest possible manner.

Mrs. Grier: As the minister said, I am very well aware of the various roles and responsibilities of Ontario Hydro, AECB and the federal Department of Transport, but I am also aware that the role of the provincial Minister of the Environment is to give the public an opportunity for comment and discussion of issues of public concern.

If, as the minister says, he shares the concern of the public, which has raised this issue, and if he is aware that at the Metro transportation committee this morning a report showed that once a week there is transportation of the most radioactive sort of this material through Metropolitan Toronto and along Highway 401, may I repeat my previous question? Is the minister prepared to allow public hearings and an environmental assessment into this question before Ontario Hydro moves any more of this material?

Mr. Warner: Yes or no?

Mr. Wildman: Yes or no?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I know the members of the third party will not want a simple answer to a complex question; therefore, they will not want a yes or no. This matter is under active and immediate consideration, and I expect an announcement will be made in the very near future. I think the member knows it will reflect all environmental concerns that have been expressed.

ATTENDANCE OF MINISTERS

Mr. Andrewes: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: We have a very important issue which we wish to discuss with the Acting Minister of Northern Development and Mines (Mr. Peterson). We note the absence of the Premier (Mr. Peterson), the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr. O'Neil), the Minister of

Municipal Affairs (Mr. Grandmaître), the Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs (Mr. Van Horne)—

Mr. Speaker: On a point of order.

Mr. Andrewes: My point of order is that in the absence of these ministers, I ask the government House leader, pursuant to standing order 29(h), to permit the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Northern Development and Mines to answer questions.

Mr. Speaker: As I understand that standing order, it states that the Premier must give the authority.

LAYOFFS

Mr. Pope: In the absence of the Minister of Northern Development and Mines, the Premier and the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology, I will ask my question of the government House leader and the Treasurer, in whose hands some of these matters seem to reside from time to time.

The minister will know that in 1986 the total number of layoffs in northeastern Ontario increased by 48 per cent. In the same period in northwestern Ontario, the number of layoffs increased by 254 per cent, indicating a very serious problem in northern Ontario. In 1986 alone, more than 5,000 workers in northern Ontario and their families, many of them in single-resource communities, faced actual layoffs or notice of layoffs.

Can the Treasurer and government House leader tell me what this government has done to help the laid-off workers at Pic River Forest Products, Algoma Steel, the iron workers at the iron ore mine in Wawa and the workers at Great Lakes Forest Products, at Kidd Creek Mines and at Inco?

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I point out to the honourable member that 50 per cent of his caucus, including his leader, are absent today. It is no reason for my colleagues to be absent, but the Premier is indisposed. I wanted to bring that important matter to your attention, Mr. Speaker.

The member's concern for layoffs is reflected by concerns on all sides of the House. It is no help to the people who have been laid off for me to repeat what has been said by my colleagues, that in the past year 153,000 new jobs on a net basis have been established in Ontario in all areas, including the north.

I agree with the member that the proportion of these new jobs in the north is not as high as we would like, and it is not high enough for fairness and equity. Government policy is designed to try to assist in that. The Premier, as recently as last week in North Bay, announced the movement of another government ministry into northern Ontario, in North Bay.

Under the Ministry of Skills Development, we have a substantial commitment to retraining. Even in that instance, retraining must have goals that are reflected in jobs present in the concerned communities. Our policies are designed to accomplish that, but they fall far short of it. We admit that. It is also true that this has been an unpleasant aspect of northern development over the years, and we hope to correct that.

Mr. Pope: There are a number of long-term and short-term employment alternatives in which the Treasurer has an obligation to involve himself. The question with respect to the Pic River Forest Products layoffs was asked by the member for Lake Nipigon (Mr. Pouliot) on November 18, 1985. The question with respect to layoffs in Sudbury was first raised on November 21, 1985. Plant shutdowns in northern Ontario were first raised by the member for Port Arthur (Mr. Foulds) on December 3, 1985. Other plant shutdowns in the Sudbury region were raised on December 3, 1985.

Most of the layoffs to which I have just referred were announced in 1985. Since then, there has not been one long-term or short-term employment program to assist those laid-off workers in those communities. When is this government going to get rid of the kind of paralysis that seems to be affecting the Ministry of the Environment, when 1,400 jobs are at stake in Terrace Bay? When is the government going to get rid of that paralysis and do something to help laid-off workers in northern Ontario?

1430

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The House is aware that the government has a variety of programs that are designed to assist in emergency situations where there are layoffs. The government of Canada shares in this as well. We have tried to reflect that in some centres, particularly Elliot Lake, Sudbury, Sault Ste. Marie and Thunder Bay. I could list a number of these communities.

It is not within my ability to respond directly to the individual situations that the honourable member has put before the House, which are regrettable. I simply reiterate the general programs that are available to assist in retraining and relocation, if necessary, although that is not the

sort of solution we look for, and generally to alleviate a situation that is bad and does not seem to be getting better.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Mr. Reville: I have a question about Trintek and I would like to place it to the Minister of Energy. There are two energy-from-waste projects of passionate interest to my people in Riverdale. One, the city of Toronto's refuse-fired steam plant, is subject to an environmental assessment under the the Environmental Assessment Act, and the city has provided \$50,000 to Citizens for a Safe Environment so it can participate in the public hearings.

Will the Minister of Energy recommend to his colleague the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) that the Trintek proposal, a private proposal of about one third to one half the size of the city's proposal, be dealt with in the same way; that is, under the Environmental Assessment Act, with public hearings and intervener funding?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: Of course, I am very anxious to deal with energy from waste as one of the alternatives to landfill, the other alternative, to generate electricity from other sources where there is a great deal of waste to be used in that fashion. This government has undertaken to put forward some \$6 million for this kind of project in northern Ontario.

I can tell the member we are very anxious to make certain that state of the art is going to exist in the installation of these kinds of plants, but I am not prepared to make government policy here on the floor of the Legislature when the member poses a question.

Mr. Reville: The Minister of Energy is prepared to have extensive discussions with Trintek and to offer Trintek millions of dollars of public money, and yet he will not stand in this House and say he wants that project to be environmentally safe. Will the minister now reconsider, look over at his colleague the Minister of the Environment and at the rest of this House and say that this project must not go forward unless it is under the Environmental Assessment Act, with public hearings and intervener funding? Nothing else will do.

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: I am not willing to accept that we are going forward with anything other than the very safest environmental equipment that exists today. The member made that comment, and I am not prepared to accept it. I said very specifically that this government is

going to see that any energy-from-waste project is environmentally safe.

At this time, they are not obliged to do some things that we are with one of the things done by municipalities. I am just suggesting to the member that I am not prepared to change that kind of policy here and now. I am certainly prepared to talk to my good friend the Minister of the Environment. We happen to get along very well. We have the same thoughts in mind about protecting the environment of Ontario. We work very closely to do that and we shall continue to do so.

I will have an answer to the member's question after we decide whether that is appropriate, but I cannot do that in an ad hoc way. I am just not prepared to do that.

PLANT SHUTDOWN

Mr. Brandt: Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr. O'Neil) and in the absence of the Premier (Mr. Peterson), I will address a question to the government House leader. It is with respect to a speech that was given and a policy statement that was released back in April 1985. I am sure he will remember that very important time of year when a number of statements were being made. This statement pertained to the need for a justification on the part of any company that decided to close down and lay off workers. Can the House leader indicate to the members of the Legislative Assembly what kind of justification was given by Cadbury when it decided to close down that plant?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Unfortunately, and this information has already been made available to the House, the closedown was announced before the government was even informed it was happening. This is regrettable. It has happened in the past, and I hope legislation that is being considered will mean it will not happen in the future. The legislation is not before the House, but it is based on the very statement to which the honourable member referred.

The member might look back in Hansard for last week, when a similar question was asked by a representative of the New Democratic Party just as effectively and the same answer was given. The matter is under active consideration. However, I thank the member for his assistance.

Mr. Brandt: I am asking the question to bring to the government's attention that it has made statements—this may come as a surprise—on which it has not followed through.

Has the House leader, the Premier or any member of cabinet required of Cadbury that its people sit down and discuss the reasons they closed down that plant? In the light of the fact that we do not have legislation in place at the moment, has the House leader attempted in any way, shape or form to keep that plant open? Have there been any contacts, or has he simply sat over there waiting for some long-promised legislation that has not come before the House yet?

Mr. Breaugh: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I appreciate this question, but we should get it straight that it is the Neilson company that is closing the plant, not the Cadbury company.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The ministry officials have met with the officials of the company concerned, so that the information is available to the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology. They are attempting to see what can be done. So far, I cannot announce on behalf of my colleagues anything more positive than continuing contacts.

[Later]

Mr. Brandt: On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Can you wait until the end of question period?

Mr. Brandt: It is a very brief point of privilege. The member for Oshawa (Mr. Breaugh), in an attempt to be helpful, pointed out to the House that the plant that was closed was the Neilson plant. I point out by way of privilege that it was the Cadbury plant, owned by Neilson. I wanted that clarification for the House.

Mr. Speaker: Members have the right to get up and correct their own record, but not someone else's record.

PAPER MILL

Mr. Pouliot: I have a question for the Minister of the Environment, who has chosen to be in the House today. It is like some of the tales of Houdini. At times we see the minister, but most times we do not lately. The Lazarus syndrome is alive and well.

Mr. Speaker: Now that he sees him, the member should ask the question.

Mr. Pouliot: When the minister finally makes up his mind what he is going to do about Kimberly-Clark and when he finally resolves his arguments with the members of his cabinet, will he give me a guarantee that, whatever he does, there will be no further jobs lost at Kimberly-Clark?

Mr. Pope: He should be able to do that.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: First, I do not control the decision-making process of any particular company in this province. There are many factors that are taken into consideration by any corporation in any jurisdiction before that company makes a decision on whether it will close, scale down or expand operations; in other words, what it is going to do.

The member has indicated publicly that he believes the company has done more than its fair share to meet its environmental commitments in this province. I know he is concerned about the effect on his riding of any potential control order. However, I want to inform him that we wish to come up with a control order, and I am working on that at present, which will be beneficial and effective in terms of the environment. It is my belief that it is not necessary for any company in the province to close because of control orders. We are looking at a number of innovations and ideas that we hope will be helpful.

Mrs. Grier: The minister talks about the decision-making process being in the purview of the company, and in response to questions from the member for Durham-York (Mr. Stevenson) he talked about the need for the company to prove the need for financial assistance. Will the minister explain to us why, in all the negotiations with Kimberly-Clark, there does not appear to have been any attempt to negotiate how it might comply with the order and how the government might assist it in complying with the order? Why is the minister not offering this company the financial assistance necessary to fulfil the environmental requirement and taking some equity in the company so that he has a say in the guarantees of the jobs in that company?

1440

Hon. Mr. Bradley: My friend the member for Lakeshore (Mrs. Grier) brings a different approach to this matter from that of the member for Lake Nipigon (Mr. Pouliot).

Interjections.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: Today it is the same approach; I am sorry.

The member for Lakeshore put forward a suggestion and I must say I indicated in my remarks to both the member for Durham-York and the member for Lake Nipigon that the government is considering a number of options and has been for some time.

I know in the past the member has been an advocate that, if at all possible, the polluter assumes the cost of any pollution abatement

activities that might be undertaken. I know her colleague the member for Lake Nipigon is of the belief that in this specific case the polluter might not have the kind of funds necessary to undertake this.

We would want to be assured that this was the case before making a final commitment in that direction. However, I want to assure members that we are canvassing a number of options which we believe should make it an effective and useful environmental control order. At the same time, I do not believe the company should be in the position of announcing any closing because of any environmental activities that take place in that part of the province.

AGRICULTURAL FUNDING

Mr. Stevenson: I have a question of the Minister of Agriculture and Food. In previous questions on the Natural Fry matter, he stated in this House that he and his staff had not been involved in this issue at all. I would like to read small sections of two letters we now have from growers.

"Mr. Riddell again confirmed that the money was coming and that he would have all the bank managers contacted and assure them of same. Before we left the meeting, Mr. Riddell instructed his staff to fulfil this commitment."

In a second letter:

"Mr. Riddell again assured us that assistance was coming and he had his staff take the names of our banks with the instruction that they were to call our bank managers and assure them of OMAF's commitment to this endeavour."

Will the minister now admit that he and his ministry staff led these potato growers into financial disaster?

Hon. Mr. Riddell: No, I would not admit such a thing. As I indicated to the member for Durham-York on a number of occasions when I have had to respond to this question, I would be delighted to see any written correspondence this minister or staff sent to any potato grower, to any bank or to anyone else who expressed a concern about this matter.

I have talked to my staff, we have checked our files and absolutely nowhere in our files could a letter be produced that was sent out by this minister assuring any potato grower of financial assistance. What I have said in responding to this question on numerous occasions is that I was prepared to go to cabinet with a submission asking for some financial assistance for those potato growers who were in default of payment by Natural Fry, but such a submission was

dependent on a third-party equity investor in Natural Fry.

We thought there would be a third-party equity investor but the company that was showing some interest decided there was not enough—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Stevenson: It is very clear the message of this minister today is that his word is no good unless it is in writing.

The third-party issue came along long after the financial support was discussed, and the minister is very much aware of that. I will read a portion of a third letter from Douglas Downey. I am sorry I did not give the names for the previous two letters but they are available for anybody who wants them.

“Mr. Devlin,” who is the manager of the Standard Chartered Bank of Canada, “indicated to my lawyer that he had received a letter from the minister of agriculture which indicated that a loan guarantee in the amount of \$400,000 will be forthcoming and it is to be principally used to pay off growers owed by Natural Fry.”

Is the minister saying that letter was never written? Why does he not get off his butt today and immediately pay these farmers whom he undoubtedly led into trouble?

Hon. Mr. Riddell: I have copies of those letters and I probably had copies of those letters before the member—

Mr. Davis: You say that you did not have any letters.

Hon. Mr. Riddell: The letters the member is referring to; the letters he is reading from.

I am still waiting for Mr. Devlin to send me a copy of any letter that I have written. I have not received it yet but I am very anxious to receive such a letter, because in all honesty, I do not recall ever sending such a letter to anyone, to banks or potato growers. We have met with the potato growers and as soon as the potato growers decide whether they want a financial protection program in place, I think we can arrange for some financial assistance to the potato growers who sent their potatoes to Natural Fry and have not received payment. I believe we can render assistance if they decide on a financial protection program. The ball now is in their court. As soon as those growers get back to me, we will see what we can do to help them.

NORTHERN ONTARIO FUND

Mr. Wildman: Now that the chocolaty quote is over, I have a question for the Treasurer in his role as a leading cabinet source re the speculative

story appearing in the Saturday edition of the Globe and Mail. Can the Treasurer enlighten the House as to the magnitude of the proposed northern Ontario fund he is considering and assure us that this fund will not be simply more of the same, an extension of the pork-barrel approach of the past, but rather that the expenditures from the fund will result from a systematic planning approach for northern development and diversification by the provincial government in consultation with northerners?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Actually, I thought the honourable member might have been part of the source on which the story was based, as I have heard him talk about this matter in the past. The concept is just a gleam in the Treasurer's eye, so to speak, although I cannot say there is anything incorrect about the story. I do not feel too put out about the fact it was printed because it may stimulate some interesting discussion and even interesting questions of the type the member has put forward.

I can assure the members that the farthest thing from our mind is some sort of continuation of the northern pork barrel that we inherited. We want to re-establish it on a fair and equitable basis that will meet the needs of northerners and that will be seen to be meeting the needs of northerners. I appreciate the assistance of the member in this regard.

Mr. Wildman: I have never claimed to be a cabinet source. I would like the Treasurer to confirm or deny the statement that said he was considering the dimensions of a northern fund and whether it could be used for continuing development or be a rainy day economic tool.

1450

Will the minister not agree that we have had far too many rainy days in northern communities during the past year or so? Is he prepared to end the crisis management and ad hoc, stopgap measures of the Tory governments of the past, which are what we have also seen from this Liberal government, with regard to the assistance given to Manitouwadge and Marathon, for instance?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The speculative piece really did read like a crossword definition list. Presumably, the rainy day tool is an umbrella, unless the member has something else in mind. I assure members that our intentions are sterling, that we want to do the best in the disposition of public funds, scarce though those are, so the north gets its fair share and programs will be seen to be equitable and fair, unlike those programs we

inherited. It is quite a challenge for us to look at the array of programs in place now and see that they can be amended so that they service the needs of the north and that northerners participate in those decisions.

CONTROL OF SMOKING

Mr. Sterling: I have a question of the Minister of Health. The Minister of Health knows that Bill 71, the Non-Smokers' Protection Act, is before this Legislature for third and final reading. In fact, this Legislature could deal with it in about five minutes. His officials have been attending all the hearings in relation to Bill 71. I would like to know what the minister's objections are to the principles of controlling smoking in public and in the work place and what specific objections he has to Bill 71. I think I have a right to know.

Hon. Mr. Elston: I do not think anyone here has a particular objection in principle to the honourable gentleman's desire to control smoking in the work place. In fact, the member will acknowledge that I did announce the policy of the Ministry of Health with respect to controlling smoking and doing it in a sensible way in allowing procedures to be put in place which accommodate those people who need assistance to help them stop smoking. As I mentioned last week, those types of principles are for a number of us, for most of us probably, without question the ones we would like to pursue. That is what the Ministry of Health is doing.

With respect to the work place, the Minister of Health does not have exclusive jurisdiction with respect to control of the work place. That is done in co-operation, between myself and the Minister of Labour. We have a number of people who may be required to co-ordinate efforts to assist us to come up with an overall policy, but with respect to enforcement and other things, I have to work in only those spheres where the Minister of Health has direct legislative authorization to do so.

Mr. Sterling: We are talking about making legislation. We are talking about a piece of legislation passed by all members of this Legislature. The question is—and I do not want him to dodge it, because I am going to continue to dog him on it until he answers it—what are his objections to Bill 71? Is he for or against it?

Hon. Mr. Elston: I support the principle of Bill 71, as I said earlier, and I suspect all members here support the idea of making the work place and public buildings more reasonable places to be. We all recognize the problems the honourable gentleman's bill attempts to deal

with, that is, the question of secondhand smoke as well as the dangers inherent in smoking, as have been set out before.

I have a particular situation in my own ministry that I have announced we are pursuing, which is dealing with the question of secondhand smoke. We will continue to deal with that. I support the principle of the bill but we have not yet come to grips with some of the problems inherent in the manner in which the bill is designed to be enforced.

JUVENILE CRIME

Mr. Philip: I have a question for the Minister of Correctional Services. Is the minister aware of a proposal before his ministry for a study on the effects of vision assessment and therapy and learning disorders on juvenile crime? If so, will the minister give us his assurance that he will support such a study?

Hon. Mr. Keyes: I am not aware of the exact details of a study going that far. I am aware, however, that we have been doing a great deal of work with additional contracts for services for people suffering psychological, psychiatric and behavioural disorders. There has been some discussion only on that, but I will gladly check and bring further details to the honourable member.

Mr. Philip: When the minister is checking it out, he may be very interested to know that the original studies started in another ministry. According to the proposal before his ministry now, on the basis of American research, for the expenditure of \$400,000, the minister would likely save some \$4.5 million in correctional costs alone. Will the minister assure the House that he will give careful consideration to the proposal, not only in the light of the human waste that is being caused under the present system but also from the point of view of the tax money he would save?

Hon. Mr. Keyes: I will be happy to give that assurance. I will be happy to do anything that will keep our ministry in the forefront of reform in the field of corrections.

PRIVACY RIGHTS

Mr. Gregory: My question is to the Minister of Transportation and Communications. In the latter part of October 1986, concern was expressed by my colleague the member for St. George (Ms. Fish) about the accessibility to driver and vehicle information through the ministry. In response to those concerns, the minister stated in a press release that his ministry

would introduce a revised, stricter system and that his staff would monitor the nature of the requests for information for a 30-day period to determine whether any further changes to policy were needed.

Has the minister determined whether any further changes to the driver and vehicle information search procedures are necessary?

Hon. Mr. Fulton: I think the honourable member is referring to the first part of the request of the member for St. George. That related to information obtained through the licence plate. We did implement that for a 30-day period. We have found it most satisfactory and have continued with the new reform and regulation related to the information obtainable from the licence plate, as we said we would. We have continued that practice.

Mr. Gregory: In the press release we referred to a few minutes ago, the minister stated that those who request information will now have to provide their name and address, produce confirming identification and give the reason for the search.

Consistent with her concern for the safety of the women in this province, my colleague in a letter to the minister dated October 30 offered two additional changes to protect further the right to privacy of women drivers in Ontario. As the opposition critic for the Ministry of Transportation and Communications, I share the concern of my colleague and I extend it to all drivers in this province. Has the minister implemented the additional changes recommended to him at that time?

Hon. Mr. Fulton: As previously stated, there are really two parts to the question that is being asked. One is that we have implemented for the 30-day period the information that was available on the basis of the licence plate. We are satisfied with the changes that were made and we are going to carry them on as a matter of policy.

The second part that the member is referring to concerns information related to the driver's licence, which is under current review. Any change that may be necessary to protect the interests of female or male drivers throughout the province will be effected in the near future if it is deemed to be necessary.

PLANT SHUTDOWN

Mr. Breagh: I have a question for the Deputy Premier. Will the government of Ontario intervene before the Canadian Competition Tribunal and register its objection to the takeover by the Neilson company of Cadbury Schweppes

and its announced intention to close the plant in Whitby?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The honourable member raised that in question period last Thursday. He raised it again today and indicated there was substantial support for such a course of action. I will see that it is given serious consideration if it is not already under consideration.

Mr. Breagh: Would it be reasonable to assume that an announcement will be made this week on the government's intention to intervene on behalf of the 400 workers in that plant?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: If the government decides to intervene, it will be reasonable to assume that.

1500

Mr. Speaker: Does that complete question period? The member for Scarborough-Ellesmere.

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

Mr. Warner: I have a question for the Minister of Skills Development. Has he either been given instructions by the Premier (Mr. Peterson) or has he taken it upon himself to report to the Premier within six months with a strategy for an education training system, as suggested in the Dryden report?

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: We should congratulate the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere for quickly identifying that no one in either opposition party had any more questions to ask, notwithstanding that the time for question period had not expired.

The answer is a simple one. I have neither reported to the Premier with a strategy nor made that recommendation, but I will tell the member this time, as I have told him many times before in connection with the Dryden report, we are carefully considering many of the themes that have been identified in the report. As we proceed, we will keep him advised on where we are going on it.

Mr. Warner: There is no shortage of questions. It is a shortage of answers that is the problem.

Does the minister not realize the essence of the report is that the education training system has failed the young people of this province and what is needed is a new direction? Will he give us the commitment that he will provide an overall plan within six months?

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: My friend the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere is not unlike an individual who has one theme he sees in everything. Whatever report he reads, he sees that theme; so I

can understand why he identifies that theme and that theme only as he reads through the Dryden report.

As I have said before, in writing that report Mr. Dryden identified from the very beginning that the problem of youth unemployment in Ontario and Canada is perhaps one of the most complex problems we have in that it touches almost every aspect of life—family issues, economic structural issues, federal-provincial issues and the like. The member wants a simple answer to a very complex question, and I am not going to give it to him.

MOTIONS

COMMITTEE SITTINGS

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved that the select committee on health be authorized to meet following routine proceedings on Wednesday, January 21, and Thursday, January 22.

Motion agreed to.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved that Miss Stephenson and Mr. Grossman exchange places in the order of precedence for private members' public business and that, notwithstanding standing order 71(h), the requirement for notice be waived with respect to the ballot item standing in the name of Mr. Grossman.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The member should not say we never did anything for him.

Motion agreed to.

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTIONS

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved government notice of motion 10, routine committee assignment changes.

Reading dispensed with [see Votes and Proceedings].

Motion agreed to.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

CITY OF MISSISSAUGA ACT

Mrs. Marland moved first reading of Bill Pr59, An Act respecting the City of Mississauga.

Motion agreed to.

CITY OF HAMILTON ACT

Mr. Charlton moved first reading of Bill Pr15, An Act respecting the City of Hamilton.

Motion agreed to.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

House in committee of supply.

ESTIMATES, MINISTRY OF HOUSING (continued)

On vote 1903, real estate program:

Mr. Chairman: Order. There are many conversations going on. Will you please break up the conversations so we can carry on with the estimates?

On Thursday, we were in the middle of vote 1903. Do either of the critics have anything to say? Thank you. Perhaps the members near the member for Riverdale (Mr. Reville) could carry on their conversation elsewhere.

Mr. Reville: You and me both, Mr. Chairman. We will quieten them down right away.

When we were last at this place in the book, my colleague the member for Etobicoke (Mr. Philip) was having at the minister about the Ontario Land Corp. I would like to return to the OLC and ask the minister some questions. We see by the minister's statement that a new philosophy has been developed in terms of the goals of the Ontario Land Corp. I welcome that change in philosophy, but I would like to examine in a little more detail the nature of the change to determine whether this is a real change in philosophy or whether this is a rhetorical change in philosophy. I am sure the minister will help us with this.

On page 8 of his statement, the minister says a major component of the assured housing strategy is to promote the use of government lands for rental housing. That assured housing strategy plank has now been grafted on to the OLC's goals. Could he explain in more detail how that is to work and what are the criteria by which he decides whether the sale of a piece of government land advances the goals of his assured housing strategy?

1510

Hon. Mr. Curling: I stated in my opening remarks how the utilization of government lands would bring about affordable accommodation; that the land would be used as a tool in that sense. I also explained in my opening remarks that the rental housing utilization of lands committee will sit down to work with all the criteria to be used. That has not yet been fully prepared. One of the factors in the cost of housing is the price of land. We felt that we could use available government land to reduce the cost. In disposing of our land, we will respect the marketplace and all other

criteria which may have some effect. The bottom line is to use the land to bring affordability closer to the people who need that type of accommodation.

Mr. Reville: Is the strategy to market the lands under the control of the OLC at their book value, at their market value or at some other value?

Hon. Mr. Curling: In my statement, I said there are certain lands that we will bring up if they are to be serviced. If they are to be disposed of, we will get market value, the best price for that land. As I said just a few moments ago, it will be done so as not to put any undue pressure on the market itself and suppress the price. We want to get the best price for government lands, and not just have a fire sale.

Mr. Reville: I detect some inconsistency in the minister's policy thrust here. The objective is to further the goals of the affordable housing strategy. Given that the cost of land and the speculative profits that are found in the cost of land are one of the reasons that we cannot get affordable housing, how can the minister achieve affordable housing goals by selling government lands at market value? There is an inconsistency here.

Hon. Mr. Curling: I do not see any inconsistency with that. The member asked me whether there would be a fire sale. He did not use those words, but he asked how we were going to do this. I told him in a very responsible way, that is one indication, in selling it to the private investors. The cost of building affordable housing is high because land prices drive up the prices. We were using land in that way to bring up the price. Perhaps we could stretch out the payments over time so as not to increase the cost unduly.

There is no inconsistency. There are different ways, different lands and different individuals. There is commercial, industrial and residential land. We will be using various kinds of lands in various ways to make sure, first, that we get the best price for that land if we sell it to the private sector; and second, if it is targeted to housing, which is very much my concern, that people who need residential accommodation get it at an affordable rate.

Mr. Reville: This is perhaps one of the most absurd answers I have heard yet. The minister is saying he is going to sell the land to get the best price possible. Why is the government behaving like a speculator? How can the government achieve affordable housing if it is selling land at the top price?

I want to know how much the minister thinks is an appropriate unit cost of land. His notion that the payments can be spread over a number of years seems to indicate he has no notion of what a mortgage is. A mortgage spreads out payment over a number of years. That has been one of the problems. Because you are paying over a number of years, the amount of interest you pay on the capital cost of the housing project drives the costs way up. Surely the minister is not going to suggest that this is the brilliant strategy for the Ontario Land Corp.

Hon. Mr. Curling: The only way that the member may understand is for me to keep on repeating what I have said. I am hearing from him that we should not give away the land. We have government land, and I think he feels that just to dispose of it—

Mr. Reville: I did not say that.

Hon. Mr. Curling: He did not say that. We are going to behave in a responsible way. We have good land to sell and we will quite possibly sell it for industrial and commercial purposes. Where people are confronted with the problem of the affordability of housing, we will use that land as a way to bring affordable housing to those people. A committee has been struck to examine the best way to do this. There is no inconsistency in that. Each case will be examined and addressed accordingly.

Mr. Reville: I want to ask the minister how much of the capital cost of any typical housing project is contributed by land cost.

Hon. Mr. Curling: It varies, depending on the region and the availability of land. I gather it could go to about 30 per cent. The cost rises because there is no land available in some instances. I cannot give a precise answer. It depends on the region.

Mr. Reville: Would the minister agree that one of the problems in building affordable housing is not that there is not any land but that the land that is available is so expensive that the cost of the housing on the land is perforce too high?

Hon. Mr. Curling: Being very technical, of course, there are all kinds of lands all over the place. Would you build there? Is there accessibility to transportation, etc.? We are speaking in those terms. It is not going to be an elementary explanation because I know my honourable friend is a quite learned individual and quite up to date in what is required in having affordable housing because of accessibility. There are all types of land in Ontario. I have driven from Sault

Ste. Marie to Kenora, and I have seen lands that stretch forever. There are swamps too, of course, but there is heartland.

When we spoke about lands, I thought we were talking about lands that are accessible to transportation, to shopping, etc.

1520

Mr. Reville: The lands that are managed by the Ontario Land. Corp. at the moment were acquired by the Ontario taxpayers at a particular cost. There is a book value for those lands. Why will the minister not offer those lands, for housing purposes only, at less than market value as long as he recoups the taxpayers' investment? What is his problem?

Hon. Mr. Curling: Again, as I said at the rental housing utilization of lands committee, we will be looking at all these. I think it an excellent idea. If we are going to sell it at less than market value, we are going to make sure we address it to those in need. When the committee sits down to examine that, one of the things we may do is say we encourage one to build in an area where that is needed. It is quite possible that is one of things we may do in addressing this need. That will be taken into consideration; I think it is an excellent idea.

Mr. Reville: There is a project that I am not at all familiar with described in the minister's address to this vote, on page 10. It relates to a tender call for the sale and conversion to housing of Victoria College in Cobourg. I assume that Victoria College was at one time owned by one of the ministries of the government, that it is now no longer in use and that the government is prepared call for tenders on having it converted to housing. It sounds like a good idea. Will the minister describe the proposal call to us so perhaps we can get some inkling of the minister's policy?

Hon. Mr. Curling: A tender call was issued, and the ministry was not satisfied with that tender call. We will issue it again. If the member wants me to send him the detail of the process of the tender call, I will gladly do so, because that is what he requires to get a feel of what the tender call is all about. I can have the staff prepare for him a detailed process of what the tender call is all about. He can then sit at home and digest that. I think it will meet his requirements.

Mr. Reville: I will appreciate it if the minister provides the details of the tender call in respect of Victoria College in Cobourg, although I will reserve the right not to read it at home, because I am not there long enough to read anything lengthy. I am interested, though, in why the first

tender call was not successful. Was it because the type of housing tendered was inadequate or because the amount of money the developer was prepared to pay for the site was inappropriate?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I gather that when the tenders were received they did not meet the requirements as laid down in the document. That was the main reason it was reissued.

Mr. Reville: With respect, that was precisely the question I asked. I understand it did not meet the requirements of the tender call. I am asking whether the minister will tell us in which respects it did not meet the terms of the tender call.

Hon. Mr. Curling: I stated I could make available to the honourable member why they did not meet the requirements. As with most tenders, people buying land, renting or whatever put certain conditions to their applications, and if the applications do not meet our requirements, we will turn them down, accept one or go for another call. If he wants more details than that, I can make available the requirements stipulated and why the tenders were turned down.

Mr. Reville: That concludes my questions for this time.

Mr. Gordon: I am prepared to vote on this section.

Vote 1903 agreed to.

On vote 1904, community housing program.

Hon. Mr. Curling: I would like to make some comments on this. Pray thee that the voice maintains its resonance.

This ministry has many responsibilities, ranging from the building industry strategy through to its internal operations, such as management resources, shared services and long-term fiscal and human resource planning. The issue that must and does dominate our operations and existence is housing and housing supply. That is the crux of the comments I would like to make now with regard to vote 1904, community housing.

I should like to begin by outlining what this government has set as its housing policy. Simply stated, this government believes that the people of Ontario deserve access to affordable, good-quality housing, and in turn, the public rightly expect its provincial government to do everything feasible to make this objective a reality.

Members will recall that in December 1985, I announced the assured housing policy, a broad spectrum of programs designed to address the serious shortage of rental accommodation that existed across Ontario. I began by making a commitment at that time to produce 6,700 social

housing units each year for five years in the form of municipal—

Mr. O'Connor: What is the minister talking about? There has not been one in Oakville. He has not given us a cent in two years. This is absolute drivel.

Mr. Chairman: Order. The member for Oakville will have his chance to comment as soon as the minister is through.

Hon. Mr. Curling: It is surprising that many of the members feel this whole shortage came about in the past couple of months or so, but I would say it was the gross neglect by the previous government.

As I stated, I began my commitment at that time to produce 6,700 social housing units each year for five years in the form of municipal and private nonprofit housing as well as co-operative projects.

I am pleased to report that we have in process applications for projects that will result in close to 16,000 rental units being committed during the current fiscal year. This total includes 6,700 nonprofit units, 5,000 modest-rental units through the Renterprise program and 4,000 new rental units through convert-to-rent. In addition, we have provided funds for the building or rehabilitation of 300 rural and native housing units.

Last fall, I had the honour of announcing an initiative of which I am extremely proud. I pledged to help nonprofit sponsors to provide an additional 3,000 housing units primarily for the most disadvantaged of our society.

Early this month, we advertised for local community organizations and nonprofit housing groups to contact us with the concept of providing shelter for the hard-to-house. While this special initiative will serve a broad range of groups, the emphasis will be on helping the neediest, such as the homeless; battered spouses; physically, developmentally and psychiatrically handicapped adults; and low-income singles. Since many of the people who will benefit from this special attention will need ongoing support, we are continuing to work closely with agencies so that these tenants will get the kind of additional support they need.

1530

Some members may already know we are planning orientation sessions for organizations interested in sponsoring this type of housing and necessary support services. Sessions will be held next month at our six regional housing program offices. If any members wish to submit the names

of potential sponsors, I will be pleased to put them in touch with the appropriate regional office.

We are calling for preliminary applications indicating an intent to develop a project to be submitted by March 31. Eligibility will depend on the degree and nature of the support share that will be provided. Later this month, we will be announcing an allocation of 6,700 nonprofit housing units under the federal-provincial housing program. I wish to repeat that this 3,000-unit provincial initiative, unlike the federal-provincial program which is cost-shared, will be funded 100 per cent by the province. The 3,000 units will be in addition to the 6,700 units.

This government now has made commitments to help generate the construction of almost 19,000 new low- and moderate-income rental apartments compared to about 6,300 units the year before. This is an increase of well over 150 per cent from those commitments in 1985-86. This surely demonstrates that we are pledged to solve the housing problems of this province. The almost 19,000 rental units committed are the highest total ever reached by the Ministry of Housing. I should point out that the highest annual total before that year was in 1975-76 when just over 10,000 units were committed. I can understand the frustration of my honourable friend across the floor.

Of the 19,000 units, more than 50 per cent will be allocated to needy households whose rents will be based on the income of the tenant rather than the type or size of the accommodation. Units will be built in nearly 300 Ontario communities, with Metro Toronto receiving more than 5,400 units or almost 35 per cent of the total.

I now would like to address the subject of the Ontario Housing Corp. as a landlord. It has often been pointed out that OHC is the largest landlord in Ontario with the responsibility to provide shelter for 340,000 men, women and children. It is also the second-largest landlord in all of North America.

Ontario Housing Corp. provides rent-geared-to-income housing for qualified lower-income families, senior citizens and physically, developmentally and psychiatrically handicapped persons. A network of 58 local housing authorities across the province is responsible for the day-to-day management of the 84,000 units owned by OHC. Another 35,000 units are supported by OHC through a variety of other programs.

Under the leadership of David B. Greenspan, who became chairman of the board of directors

this year, Ontario Housing Corp. is taking a new direction in its relationship with tenants and the broader society. Both Mr. Greenspan and I feel very strongly about meeting the responsibilities OHC has towards the taxpayers who support OHC, towards the society in which OHC operates and towards the tenants who live in the housing managed by the corporation.

I would like to speak about the major responsibilities OHC has towards its tenants, responsibilities that the corporation takes very seriously. The first and most obvious is to provide decent and affordable housing for those who require assistance. A significant portion of the commitments to the new low- and moderate-income rental apartments mentioned earlier will be made available to local housing authorities to alleviate waiting lists.

The next responsibility is to use standards for eligibility to subsidized housing that reflect the genuine need that exists in the community. An era of unprecedented social change has brought new demands on government services, which in the case of the Ontario Housing Corp. means that more people require the housing it can provide.

The breakdown of the traditional nuclear family—and that of the extended family, for that matter—has eliminated many of the structures that people used to rely on for help. As a result, we in society are faced with a new kind of human need, a human need that OHC is attempting to meet. As members are aware, during the past year we have extended eligibility to the psychiatrically handicapped as well as lowered the eligibility age for single parents from 18 to 16 years of age.

The OHC board of directors recently approved new guidelines giving top priority to battered women and their children, many of whose lives may depend on such readiness to give shelter. This policy was adopted as part of this government's commitment to improve services to victims of family violence.

One area where new initiatives are being put in place is at the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority, the largest such body in the province. I should first mention the recent appointment of John Sewell as the full-time chairman of the Metro Toronto Housing Authority. Mr. Sewell's broad interest in community affairs will bring a new sensitivity to the day-to-day management of public housing in Metro Toronto.

A second major initiative is related to the Ontario government's commitment to ensure a climate of positive race relations across the province. As I announced in the Legislature in

June 1986, a plan of action has been undertaken to ensure that race relations within housing projects, initially within Metro Toronto, remain positive.

The Metro Toronto Housing Authority serves as the landlord to 90,000 tenants, a population as great as that of the city of Sudbury. The tenants represent a wide and diverse variety of backgrounds and present equally diverse social, recreational and cultural needs. A fully comprehensive race relations policy for Ontario Housing projects in Metro Toronto is being developed.

As a first step, Mr. Chimbo Poe-Mutumba has been appointed director of race relations policies and programs for the Metro Toronto Housing Authority. His mandate is to promote and sustain an environment of harmony, co-operation and mutual understanding among residents. Mr. Poe-Mutumba is a catalyst. He will draw on the strength and resources of both the professional resource people already serving the residents of MTHA and the residents themselves. The director is already moving quickly to develop a race relations policy statement that reflects the views of the tenants and local community organizations, and then to implement that policy statement in constructive and meaningful ways. The director will also chair a committee of tenants, community representatives and housing authority staff.

The director is responsible for a number of initiatives whose ultimate goal is to improve the quality of life in Metro Toronto housing projects. These include adding 11 new community relations workers to the staff, bringing the total to 38; working with the housing authority staff to find ways to improve communications and eliminate misunderstandings between tenants and staff; exploring methods of recruiting multilingual and racial minority staff; and developing and implementing cross-cultural training for housing authority maintenance workers.

Significant steps are being taken to ensure that the 58 local housing authorities reflect the real makeup of Ontario's population. Housing authority members are appointed by all three levels of government. I have requested that the Honourable Stewart McInnes, the federal minister responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp., and all of Ontario's municipal councils begin now to ensure that the membership of housing authorities accurately represents the people of this province.

1540

We also want to ensure that Ontario Housing Corp. tenants are fully familiar with the cultural,

social, recreational and educational programs provided by all provincial ministries. Staff of OHC want to make sure that tenants have access to every program and service that might be of assistance, whether it be a community-based social service or a program provided by another ministry.

Another challenge OHC faces is to come to grips with the cycle of economic and educational defeat that affects so many tenants, particularly the young. The lack of steady employment is a major problem for many tenants and, when coupled with social difficulties, can lead to further problems. OHC is committed to developing ways to target our residents, particularly the young, for Ontario employment and job training programs. Housing authorities are looking at ways in which young residents might be hired through our job creation programs. These measures are intended to provide tenants with economic opportunities to which they might not otherwise have access.

Major strides are also being made in improving relations between OHC as a landlord and the tenants in the projects across the province. Whether our tenants are in the system temporarily as a result of some unforeseen crisis or as a necessity to begin a new life in this province or whether they are there permanently—and the reality is that many of them are there permanently—all deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. Our tenants have a need for comfort and security, and OHC has a responsibility to improve their quality of life.

The Ontario Housing Corp. has established an enviable record for the range of programs that is made available to young people. We are going to build on that record and make our housing projects a better place to live.

We could restrict ourselves to looking after the bricks and mortar of housing units or we can work to achieve an environment that gives people the chance to become all they are capable of becoming. We want an environment that encourages the young and sustains the elderly, that generates pride and self-respect for all.

I would like to end my remarks by touching on the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless. With a United Nations designation, the government of Canada agreed to recognize and support a global effort measurably to improve the living conditions of the poor within all nations. Canada designated Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp. as its agent for this undertaking.

Ontario is the first province to establish a supportive initiative. A ministry staff secretariat

has been established to provide support services, act as a liaison with other ministries and governments and design and implement a public awareness program. Also, a 10-person advisory committee representing various parts of this province and with demonstrated experience on the issue of homelessness will advise us and recommend long-term approaches for the future.

It has been said many times that a civilization is judged ultimately by the way in which it cares for its least fortunate citizens. In any community, those are the men, women and children known as the homeless. At present, we do not know precisely how many people are homeless in Ontario—estimates range from 5,000 to 15,000—but we do know Ontario has a moral obligation to these individuals and a commitment to do everything possible to shelter them.

Ontario is recognized as a leader in many areas of social and economic development. We must now establish Ontario as a leader in finding creative and constructive solutions for the problem of homelessness. We must examine the full range of services that are required to integrate the homeless, to help them become functioning members of our society at whatever level they choose to participate. We have the opportunity to provide dignity and security for those who have been denied those basic human needs.

Mr. Gordon: Before we launch into detailed questioning of the community housing vote in the minister's budget, I would like to make a few comments at the beginning.

I point out to the minister and the ministry that it is the duty of a critic, whether it be the New Democratic or the Conservative critic, to look not only at the programs and policies enshrined in the ministry, but it is also our responsibility to look at how and where the minister is spending the money. These estimates have given some of us on this side of the House what one could call pause. It is not, as in the advertisement, "the pause that refreshes"; it is more the pause that causes us some concern.

As the minister knows, in this province of ours, people pay personal income tax to the province. They pay moneys to the province through the sales tax every time they purchase an item. People expect that we at the second level of government in this country, the provincial level, are going to ensure, when the estimates of the various government ministries are brought forward, that the moneys are spent in a wise and thrifty manner.

No one likes to pay tax; none of us does. We do it because we believe that by paying tax we are

helping to provide better services for the majority of the people in this province. It really bothers people if they begin to feel that their tax money is not providing the greatest possible benefit to the people for whom the program or programs of a ministry such as this are intended. People are concerned whether those moneys are being spent in the most efficient, prudent and fiscally responsible manner.

I am not here to lecture the minister on the issue of how to raise taxes and how to spend money, but I have to tell him that there are those of us on this side of the House who are very concerned about this ministry and what has happened. We have been talking about his policies and we will continue to talk about his policies. I would like to talk for a few minutes about how he is spending his money.

To date, we have debated these expenditures—for example, the first item was what we call ministry administration. Then we went on to the Ontario building program. We have just finished what is called the real estate program. The purpose of an estimates debate is to hold the government of the day, or more specifically the minister of the day, responsible and accountable for his or her spending for a particular ministry.

As the estimates we are currently reviewing involve moneys already spent, it is only natural that one would expect the minister to have what one would call a more intimate understanding and knowledge of where the money has been spent and be able to account for significant changes over the previous fiscal year.

1550

What has been obvious during these estimates is that there has been a certain reluctance—for what reason only the minister can answer—to explain his estimates in the kind of detail we on this side of the House would like to see. This is something that only he can grapple with. He has to give the answer as to why this is the case.

In our view, there have been radical spending increases in this ministry. We have to ask ourselves whether this money is really going towards providing more housing and apartment units or whether it is being spent in ways that some people would call empire-building or self-publicizing breast beating and saying: "Boom, boom, boom. We are the best." Some people in the government would say that is not so, but if one picked up any paper in the last month or so and saw the full-page advertisements on Bill 51, we have to question that. We have to say, "Do you have to advertise to quite that extent?" When one considers what a full-page ad

costs today in the major and smaller newspapers, the government is spending a tremendous amount of money.

Nevertheless, I do not think it is too much to expect that when a ministry or minister requires major increases in budgetary expenditures, the minister ought to be in a position to explain why these expenditure increases are needed, specifically where the money is going and what the benefits of spending this money are going to be. I would like to point that out to the minister and to the members of the government. We want to know what the benefits are going to be of the kind of radical increases in budgets that we see in this ministry's estimates. The minister would be the first to tell me it is his role to manage and to look not only at the overall picture of his ministry, and he has pointed that out to us, but also at the various component parts.

What I have found particularly frustrating to date is, as I said, there seems to be what some would call an unwillingness to explain the spending that is going on within the ministry. When I look at these estimates and see major increases of as much as 100 per cent and 200 per cent in spending in this ministry and then the minister does not explain to us why this is the case, I cannot help but think perhaps the minister thinks the people of Ontario have given him an American Express credit card and carte blanche to spend anything and everything he wants.

We all know that just recently the government decided it was going to use American Express as the card of choice for this government. That is despite the fact this government says it is concerned about the fact that so far Toronto has not been designated as an international banking centre. The people of this province have not given the minister a credit card or carte blanche for spending, but it looks to us as if he thinks he is dealing with credit card money rather than the real dollars so many people have to fork out every time they pay personal income tax in Ontario or whenever they pay for an article in a store and they have to pay sales tax.

There has to be a limit somewhere. I know who will pick up the tab when the statement comes in, that credit card statement I was talking about, which the minister seems to be using. The taxpayers of Ontario will be paying. It is painfully obvious to us on this side of the House that this ministry is out of fiscal control because it is out of political control.

Overall, the ministry is asking for a global increase of not five per cent, 10 per cent, 15 per cent, 20 per cent, 25 per cent, 30 per cent, 35 per

cent or 40 per cent, but 43.5 per cent, in 1986-87. This ministry is not hiring five more people, 20 more people, 40 more people or even 75 more people. Do I hear 125? Do I hear 150? Do I hear 195 people? I am sure the minister will be glad to get up in the House right now and enlighten us, tell us. Perhaps he will allow me to do that. It is hiring, bringing on board, in this year, when up north we have an unemployment rate of 12 per cent, people for 217 new positions. That is over and above the people working for the ministry already. Here we have a ministry that in 1986-87 has a global increase in its budget of more than 43 per cent and is opening up 217 new positions. It seems that the minister is pretty well running his ministry as if he had a credit card. The problem is the people of Ontario are going to pick up the tab. The minister is not picking up the tab; they are. I think this ministry is out of fiscal control.

Let us take a minute to review some of the spending increases set by the minister before we go on to set the stage for the community housing ballot. What did vote 1901 do? Vote 1901, which dealt with administration in the ministry, asked for a 34.6 per cent increase in expenditures over 1985-86. Eighteen new staff positions were created. If one went down the various line items, one could see that a line item analysis of the ministry administration program showed a 13 per cent increase in the main office, a 32 per cent increase in information services, a 14 per cent increase in supply and office services, a 79 per cent increase in systems development services, a 40 per cent increase in legal services and an overall increase of 34 per cent in expenditures over 1985-86 in this area alone.

Is it any wonder that when the business community examines government, it says, "You people could not run the corner store at the rate you are going." If I ran my house or my family business the way the people in the Ministry of Housing are running the ministry right now, I would be bankrupt in six months.

Mr. Davis: That is true. Why so long?

Mr. Gordon: Perhaps I am brave and optimistic and think I could last six months. Perhaps I could last only three months. Let us take the average Ontarians, statistically: a man and wife with 1.5 or two children. If they ran their family budget the way this budget has been run in the past year, there would be creditors at their door. There would be someone there to take away their furniture, and there would be somebody there to repossess the car. The only reason they have not repossessed this ministry is it has a free lunch.

1600

This ministry is raising taxes and then spending that money any way it wants, any way it wants at all. Those of us on this side of the House know that in this year, this government is raising a surplus of more than \$1 billion from the people of Ontario. Of course, that is the Liberal way. The Liberal way is this: "We know what is good for you; so what the good people of Ontario must do is allow us to raise the taxes, whether it be on personal income tax as was done in the first budget or whether it be on sales taxes. We will raise the money from gasoline tax"—yes, gasoline tax too—"and then we will spend it in a way that we believe is good for you."

In examining the ministry's budget, every Ontarian knows full well that for every increase in this budget—and the overall budget increase was 43 per cent, 217 new positions—there is less money in his pocket. That is less money for that individual or for that family when it comes to going out to buy milk at the corner store or to do any number of things that families or individuals in our society normally do. They have less money. That money has to come from somewhere, and it comes from the people of this province. That is where it comes from. I do not see fiscal accountability in this ministry. It is frightening to see what is happening in this ministry.

Let us be fair about it. I do not want to be unfair. I would not want the minister to walk out of here later tonight and say, "The member for Sudbury was unfair." To be perfectly fair to the minister, he did not really answer my question in a general way when I posed it. If I recall correctly, he said the increased expenditures on information services—information services, as we all know on both sides of the House, is the part of the ministry that deals with such things as pamphlets, brochures, the placing of advertisements in newspapers and that general sort of public relations that is done within a ministry.

To be perfectly fair to the minister, he did tell us that because of the advertising done by that part of his ministry that extols to the people of Ontario the virtues of the Ministry of Housing, 28,000 more have applied for social housing in Ontario. That is right. A further 28,000 people applied for social housing because of all the brochures that were put out and all the publicizing that was done. Now we can add those 28,000 people to the waiting list. It would seem to me that besides adding people to the waiting list, we should be building more housing units, more rental units for the people of Ontario.

We should try to maximize the use of the money that flows into the government and is used by the ministry. If I were maximizing the money that was coming in, I would do so in a way that made me feel comfortable, so that when I went home to my riding or to a function where there were the people of Ontario I would not feel uncomfortable and feel that they could come up to me and say: "Jim, why are you spending so much on administration in that ministry? Do you have to spend that much in administration to build one more apartment unit?" I would want to say to them that I could justify those administrative costs.

Let us talk a little bit about administration in this ministry. The minister claims that increased expenditures go to create housing for Ontarians. On this point there is a credibility gap on the minister's part. There is an increase of 34 per cent in administration—and let us be clear about this, administration is paper-pushing. We are not saying that those people who push the paper are not competent people or are not interested in what they are doing, but when the increase in a ministry in any one year is 34 per cent in administration and paper-pushing, the minister cannot tell me that is building more apartment units. That is especially so today, when one of the members on this side of the House can point out that there is a vacancy rate of zero in Burlington. In other words, if you are looking for an apartment in Burlington today it just cannot be found, period; yet the minister has here an increase of 34 per cent in administration.

Let us look at another vote we had not too long ago, the Ontario building program. In that program, the minister was asking for a 300 per cent increase in expenditures. As I said the other day, we are not saying the program itself is not worth while. We are saying the amount of money he is pouring into this program this year, a 300 per cent increase, is excessive. This program will not be worth any of the \$6.6 million that is required if the political will to give it form and substance is lacking. That is our concern on this side of the House.

Some other interesting expenditures that we should note are in the building services component of this program. It asks for a 36 per cent increase in salary expenditures alone. I am beginning to think that we on this side of the House are in the wrong business. Perhaps we should be applying for a job at the Ministry of Housing, especially with the increases in salaries we see here. I am sure a lot of people are beginning to think that they may be working in

the wrong place and that they should maybe be working for the Ministry of Housing.

It might be interesting if the minister could provide us—perhaps his staff will make note of this; I think I have already asked for it—with the salaries he is paying at the upper end in the ministry and whether these salaries have gone up in an exorbitant manner in the past two years. The minister has been there for almost two years and he has a record. He cannot go back and say, "Well, you know, three years ago, four years ago." That will not wash.

These increases we are talking about are his; they are not mine. He did not invite me over and say: "Jim, here is a pencil. Sit down with me tonight at the kitchen table, and we will rough out the budget for this Ministry of Housing on the back of an envelope." I do not think he could put it on the back of an envelope any more. Of course, we all know he is not putting it on the back of an envelope, do we not?

Under the Ontario construction program, which he launched under vote 1902, beside consultants probably the biggest expenditure was in computers. I do not want to make fun of computers. I do not want to appear like somebody who is not with it in this year, 1987. However, does the minister know what computers do? They are great big filing cards. They are big cabinets that are filled with filing cards. Electronically, we can get at the information on those filing cards. However, computers do not make a ministry, do not make policies and do not make programs; people do this. Putting more and more computerization into his ministry and spending the money he is spending right now does not mean he is going to have more housing built faster in this province. It just means he has more filing cards in a machine that allows him to get at those filing cards fast, electronically.

1610

I am not going to tell the minister about computers. I would not dare. Considering how much people know about computers in this province, I probably have already made a big mistake in talking about how little I know about computers. However, I hope the minister is not counting on those computers to build more houses for him. It requires a lot of political oomph on his part.

Let us look at a few of the other expenditures here. We have already seen there is a 36 per cent increase in salary expenditures alone. Twenty-seven additional staff persons are to be hired. I cannot help but think that somewhere, somehow, work is being duplicated in this ministry. I would

like to see the minister go through his ministry with a fine tooth comb and see whether he is not duplicating.

The point is that fiscal management suffers when political management is ineffective. Let me point out to the minister that a major portion of the increased funding for the Ontario building program is to be spent on consultants. Far be it from me to say anything in a disparaging way about consultants, but one has only to have picked up the newspapers in this great province of ours over the past few years to find there has been more frustration over consultants and the kinds of reports they bring in or do not bring in than over practically any other subject. The public is well aware of what happens when one brings in consultants.

There is something else we would like the minister to make note of. Last week the minister could not point out to me how much was going to be spent on consultants. Perhaps I was intemperate for a few seconds, and it is completely unlike me to be agitated, but when he told me to read that page and it was not there, I flew right off the handle. The minister will have to admit that he did not tell me how much he was going to spend on consultants.

I do not know whether this is some secret. I do not know whether Ward Cornell, the deputy minister of this great ministry that is out of fiscal control, is planning to bring in some British consultants from his days over there as one of our ambassadors of goodwill and so forth, but we would like to know how much these consultants are going to cost and what they are going to do. We have already indicated to the minister that we have some doubts as to whether they are going to be effective. I have a feeling he may have some answers for me on that today or tomorrow. I promise to give him my 100 per cent attention, the same as I would give my attention to the chair.

What really bothered us on this side of the House was that the minister did not tell us what criteria were going to be employed in choosing these consultants. I would not want to suggest for one minute that there might be a political element in the choosing of consultants in this province, or even federally, but I want him to know that we are going to want to know who those consultants are. We advise him to be sensitive about these matters, particularly when he is spending the kind of bucks he is planning to spend on consultants. Every once in a while patronage raises its ugly, greedy head. We want him to watch out for that.

Let us look at some of the other expenditures in this ministry. Here is one where we will give him a backhanded pat on the back. It is the one we just voted on, vote 1903, the real estate program—specifically, the budget of the Ontario Land Corp. We noted, of course, that the budget of OLC was increased by 29 per cent, but I recognize this increase is largely due to the government's decision to purchase homes situated on radioactive soil.

There was something tangible. We could actually see that the government was using money in a way that was going to provide benefit to those people and resolve an ongoing problem that required a resolution. I tip my hat to the minister. I know this is something he took a stand on even prior to the last election. It shows that I have done a little homework. I know he was sincere in that, so I congratulate him.

Hon. Mr. Curling: Thank you very much, sir.

Mr. Gordon: That is fine. I appreciate the minister's thanking me.

At the same time, I do not want him to fall over me too much, because I have to say that this purchase, this increase in his budget, the purchase of those homes that were on radioactive soil, raises a question. Considering that he is now on a fiscal spending spree in his ministry, why is the same not being done to remove the lead-contaminated soil in Riverdale? Why is he not spending some money there? I am sure the people living in Ontario would not object to that. I do not think anyone would object to that, considering that we know the effects that lead can have on people, particularly on little children. Little children playing on lead-contaminated soil are at particular risk. I do not think anyone on this side of the House would object to his spending more money in that area.

I say this to the minister to show him we are sensitive to spending that is done with an object in mind, where we can see that it is doing something specific and something that is needed, but the way he is spending money on administration and on consultants in his ministry is completely uncalled for.

It brings me back to the theme I am trying to develop, that what the people of Ontario want from their elected people, their governments, is what we call fiscal accountability. When the government takes money out of my pocket each day, either through the taxes that are deducted from my paycheque or the money I give to the government whenever I buy something, we want to know he is treating that money the same way as

I would treat it if it were still part of my budget. I say "if it were still part of my budget" because once he gets it, it is not part of my budget.

If this government is going to be like most typical Liberal governments and take the attitude, "We know what is best for you; we are going to spend the money the way we think it should be spent, and you people should be happy because our philosophy is we do what is good for you;" instead of asking, "What would you like us to do?" then the minister should go back, take another look at this budget and ask: "How can we spend the kind of money we are spending on administration? How can we spend the kind of money we are spending on consultants and advertising? How can we afford to hire 217 more people in this ministry alone in this year?"

1620

What people want from their governments is not only to lower the deficit, but also to be as lean as possible. If they are not, it means I do not have the money to spend the government has it, and I know the government will spend it the way it wants to spend it. Often, that does not make me happy.

On the other hand, I point out to the minister that we on this side of the House have no problem with justifiable increases, particularly increases in his budget that are going to be spent specifically on building more apartment units, more homes in this province for those who need those homes. That we support.

We hope the minister will continue to see housing as a component of both economic and social policy. A rational housing policy can contribute to both social justice and economic prosperity. There need not be a contradiction between liberty and equality. What the minister is asking for does not contribute to either in our view.

The minister talks about housing the needy. I listened quite carefully when he was talking about that. Yet if we look at all the programs throughout his estimates, we see his ministry has increased administration costs in all programs by 62 per cent. I cannot for the life of me figure out, taking all programs together in the estimates of his budget this year, where the increase is 62 per cent for administration, for pushing paper, how the government is going to build more apartment units or to help provide housing for the needy. A 62 per cent increase in administration costs means it is up by \$16,376,900 over 1985-86. That could provide a lot of middle-income and lower-income housing in this province. Surely the minister can find a way to cut that back.

A lot more of the need could be met if this minister would assign priority to creating supply, indirectly as well as directly. The much-vaunted Renterprise program is the minister's answer to provide supply. I am certain the minister is aware of the problems brewing in this program. I am not going to quiz him on that, but I am sure he is aware of those problems. I would like to talk about them for a minute.

The cost of labour and materials has increased by 25 per cent in the past year. Proponents involved with this program are saying to me that they cannot afford to continue in the program without further assistance from this government. In Toronto alone, 500 proposed units may never be built because of rising costs.

That is why it gives us pause when we hear the minister talking about the number of units he says he is going to bring on this year. It is one thing to say he has the applications in hand. It is another thing to say he has sat down with people. When we talk to people, not only in Toronto but also throughout Ontario, and they tell us the kinds of increased costs they are facing, it shows there is a need to re-examine that whole program.

As the Minister of Housing he is well aware that, in the opinion of many experts in the area of housing, the one major impediment to rental accommodation is cost. Where are his programs that will help lower building costs? Where are the innovative ideas to cut construction costs? Where are his supply side incentives? We do not see them. We think this is an area on which he should spend some time. Given the kind of people who are working in the ministry, I am sure that will be done. That is an area that requires more consideration.

I am sure the critic for the New Democratic Party could talk endlessly on the next topic I am going to raise. I am just going to brush over it or pass over it for a minute.

While Bill 51 was in committee, some tenant activists commented that this bill simply transfers money from the tenants' pockets to the landlords' pockets and it does not really do anything to increase the needed supply of apartment units in this province. The minister will recall we pointed out to him that the major developers in this province did not promise to increase the housing supply even at the upper end. We all know at the upper end of the apartment rental business, when those kinds of apartments are built, the cost of renting one of them is so exorbitant that a middle-income person cannot afford it and a lower-income person cannot afford it. It will be 15 or 20 years

before those units become affordable housing units. We told the minister this bill was not going to add more housing in this province.

We have had a fair amount of empire-building going on in the ministry in the past year and that is what concerns us. We do not think empire-building really helps those people who need housing in this province. It does not help the needy. It does not help those people who have affordability problems. We know there are 200,000 people in this province who need better accommodation. We know at least 40,000 require immediate social housing. We do not think building an empire in the Ministry of Housing is the way to build more.

As I pointed out the other day, we are currently dealing with a crisis in housing in this province. In Toronto at this very moment, there are not many more than 450 vacant units, and at what price? In London, a city of 290,000 people, there are 270 vacant units. That area is often held up as having a fair number of rental units available. I find it hard to believe when I read a figure like that. Maybe somebody in the Ministry of Housing will correct me and that will help me. We all want to learn.

I could go on and on stating those appalling statistics. We say to the minister, "You are the minister. The buck stops at your desk."

Supply and affordability are the key problems in this province today. These are issues that ought to deserve the utmost priority from this minister and his ministry. Unfortunately, the lack of political will and leadership being demonstrated by this government means the waiting list for social housing will only grow longer. It means those earning less than \$19,000 a year will continue to pay up to 36 per cent of their income towards rent. It means the wealthy will continue to enjoy the protection of rent controls. Half of those people earning more than \$41,000 a year pay 15 per cent of their income towards rent. These are the people who enjoy the minister's protection.

Perhaps today has been a revelation for the minister. He has come face to face with what I would call the monolithic bureaucracy he heads. I hope he finds it within himself to take control of this ministry, because it is out of fiscal control. Given the circumstances we have just outlined, it will be very difficult for him and his ministry to get the programs he wants to see in place.

1630

I would like to take this opportunity to ask a question of the minister concerning the community housing side of this vote. I would like to

know what the current status is of the granny flat program for seniors. I would also like to know how successful it has or has not been. How much additional funding will he allocate to this program? Is it considered a priority by the minister?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I thank the honourable member for his long and detailed comments. I will glance back at Hansard and learn a lot from what he said. I do not intend to comment on what he has stated. However, I do want to explain why we have increased our staff. The member must realize we have increased our programs tremendously. What bothers me from day to day in this House is the impression left by members that when we came across on June 26, all of a sudden, all available and affordable rental units disappeared; that immediately, in the course of our taking over as the government, there were no longer any available, affordable rental units across the province.

It is unproductive to harry about what the cause is, where the neglect is or where the bankrupt ideas, lack of programs or lack of initiatives were. That is counterproductive. We moved forward to put in place programs that could bring about affordable rental units for those in need. It did not come overnight. Realizing there was a problem, we addressed that need.

Of course, new programs require new management—additional management more than new management. I found there were good civil servants with good ideas within the Ministry of Housing. It is like the gold in the backyard. We go prospecting every day looking for gold and it is right there in the backyard. We just have to start digging and tapping it. We found lots of resources there. What we needed were more support staff and support ideas. We increased our staff, but in comparison to the programs we put in place it was not a very great increase. Some took place in Sudbury, in Thunder Bay and in the north. Each day I hear members in the House asking, "When are we going to do something about the north?" That is what we have done. We have increased our staffing there, not for the sake of increasing but to address needs there.

I thought I should make some comments about the things the member said, lest one may think nothing was done or we did it just because we felt that we had an American Express or a Chargex card with which we could go out and charge it.

The member mentioned a very important thing. He talked about information and what we are doing; why we are spending so much money in that line budget. It is important not only to put

programs in place but also to let people know the programs are there. We intend that they be used so that they will address those needs. One that comes to mind very readily is the Ontario home renewal program. I asked the staff not only to create new things but also to look at things that were not being used. Instead of spending the government's and the taxpayers' money wildly, I asked them to look at things that were there and were not being used, things that were dormant but would be very active if we reactivated them.

The Ontario home renewal program was a splendid example of that. A minimal amount of effort was needed. All that was needed was to let people know it was there and to start using the program again, and if it could not be used, just to recycle certain areas that were needed. That is why I believe information is important. It is not enough just to have programs; people have to know they are there and know they can be utilized.

The member asked about the portable living units for seniors program, affectionately known as the granny flats, which is taken from the Australian concept. The program was put in place on a demonstration basis of 12 units. It was intended to explore the applicability of the concept. So far, we feel the demonstration program has been very successful. As with any demonstration program, it is intended to find out where the cracks are, get the cobwebs out and see whether the program can work. Some of the problems we anticipated at the community acceptance level happened, but a tremendous number of people were asking for those demonstration programs in their communities.

So far, we have not yet evaluated the program to find out the direction we will be going. That will be determined as soon as we sit down to evaluate it. The future funding that will be put into it will be largely dependent on the evaluation of the program. The program evaluation the staff was instructed to do should not run more than about six or nine months. Within that time, I will be able to tell members more about where we are going, how much money we will be putting into the fund and the areas in which we will be increasing the granny flats, if we continue the program.

Mr. Shymko: I want to refer to the aspect of vote 1904 that deals with housing policy and program development, particularly development in the private sector. The minister may be aware of concerns I have expressed in the past. I would like to hear further clarification of the issue and the present policy to introduce a rent registry that will eventually be binding on 300,000 rental

units in the private sector in buildings with six or fewer units.

According to the minister, unless there is a policy on registry that is universally applicable to all rental units, be they basements, bachelor rooms or flats, he will face a constitutional challenge in the Supreme Court.

It is my understanding that the present policy is limited to the 18,000 residential buildings containing more than six units, as indicated in legislation that was recently passed. The minister publicly stated that even though it is limited to those 18,000 buildings with six or more units, "Complexes that contain six or fewer rental units will be brought into the registry at a later date to be prescribed."

What is the time frame for the eventual expansion to include these 300,000 units in buildings with six or fewer units? Is there such a time frame? Does he reiterate that he will have to proceed in that direction according to the present Constitution or else he may face a challenge? Does he realize that small landlords with fewer than six units have been urged to file voluntarily the information respecting any rental of their properties? They are not bound to do so, but they have been told they can and should do this.

1640

Does he realize that 25,000 units in the city of Toronto alone—I refer to units such as basements, bachelor rooms and flats—will be pulled off the rental market by small landlords who will stop renting these units because of what they perceive and have indicated they consider to be the intrusive nature of Big Brother government's registry requirements?

If we have 25,000 units removed from the rental market in the city of Toronto, and possibly 125,000 to 150,000 units in Metro Toronto, what is the cost per unit and what is the government planning to do if this happens? As he knows, this will hurt the vast majority of tenants, such as pensioners, who rent single rooms and flats. It will hurt single parents and low-income earners, whose homes will be taken off the market, thus depriving them of what is currently very affordable housing.

It will also, in my opinion—and I ask the minister whether he shares this opinion with me—hurt the middle-income earners, the individuals who rent out a flat. They are mainly working-class people who do not buy stocks and do not have investments in huge real estate deals. They have their little private home and they rent out the basement, a room or two or a flat. These are people of modest income and they will be hurt

because of this fear of an intrusion by an obligatory registry. The supply of affordable housing for our needy citizens obviously will shrink.

Is there any policy to replace the 25,000 units that will be pulled off the market in Toronto? Is there any policy to look at the cost of that? Who will replace them, at what cost and at whose cost? The implications are there. They are very serious. They have been raised already. People talk about it. I have spoken to small landlords who rent out their basement and they say: "If the registry comes in, there is no way I will follow that. I will simply not rent that unit."

Has the minister looked into this whole area? I would like to have some clarification of the present policy or the program development people's views on how this will affect the private sector in a very important area that will hurt many people.

Hon. Mr. Curling: Maybe the honourable member did not understand the rules that were laid out before. I will explain to him that it was agreed upon that we would deal with the votes vote by vote, 1901, 1902, in sequence that way. The question he raises is under vote 1905.

Mr. Shymko: I do not think I have broken any rules. If I had, the Chairman would have interrupted. Have I, Mr. Chairman?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I did not say he had broken the rules. I said he had not followed them.

Mr. Shymko: That is the same thing. Mr. Chairman, I am being accused of breaking the rules. I would like to hear the answer instead of diverging into this egotistic—

Hon. Mr. Curling: If the member will give me a chance to elaborate, I would ask that we address the matter in vote 1905.

As he was asking when we were going to include those units, it came to mind that the honourable critic suggested I should be very cautious how I increase staff with the tremendous number of programs we are bringing on stream. He said I should not not feel I have a carte blanche privilege to just increase staff. One of the reasons we have set up our program in a timely way is that we can accommodate it in a workable and practical manner.

I hope the member speaks to his critic from time to time and we can, as I would say, sing from the same hymnbook, if he uses a hymnbook. We are fiscally responsible—

Mr. Shymko: Could the minister develop what he means by hymnbooks and so on? Is he

insinuating that I do not go to church or something?

Mr. Chairman: Order.

Hon. Mr. Curling: Thank you very much. Anyway, I would ask that I be allowed to answer that matter in detail on vote 1905, where I know it will be raised again and his concerns will be addressed.

Mr. Shymko: With all due respect to the convoluted eloquence of the minister, I believe I quoted the vote 1904 item that speaks of a housing policy and program development for the private sector. If the minister takes a look at the estimates book, he will see a direct quote and a reference to that.

I do not think I am out of order. I think he can answer easily. At least, I think he has the information and the ability to answer the concerns I have raised. If the minister feels that he needs lengthy consultation with his staff, that he requires perhaps a few more hours or a few more days to respond adequately to the concern I have raised and that he will be responding under vote 1905, that is fine. It is just that I am here today and I do not know whether I will be here when he discusses this issue on vote 1905.

I am sure he is capable of answering. My questions are very simple. They are clear; they are precise; they are not complicated. I would appreciate a clear, simple, precise answer to these concerns.

Hon. Mr. Curling: As I said, the rent registry the member speaks of falls under vote 1905. I could deal with it then in detail. If the member is not here, I will send that answer to him when we cover vote 1905. I do not expect—

Mr. Chairman: Order. If the member for High Park-Swansea is asking questions that relate to the rent registry and have no connection with the two items under vote 1904, the minister is quite correct and the member would be out of order.

Mr. Shymko: I value your judgement and I know you are well versed in the rules of the House. I spoke for 10 minutes or so and you did not intervene or interrupt. Normally, if there are no interruptions from the chair, I would assume my questions and comments are in order. If, in your wisdom, you feel it should be under a different vote, my question is on the record and I am most intrigued to hear what the reply from the minister will be.

I think he is playing a legalistic game about vote 1905 because he does not have the answer. I sympathize with him that he does not have the

answer. If he requires more time, I will be more than willing to make a special effort to be here and to listen to the response from the minister, but I will not repeat my questions and state my concerns again because they are on the record.

Mr. Reville: That was an amusing diversion. I am always glad to be of assistance to the member for High Park-Swansea. He assures me that he is a working-class Conservative and he alleges that he has a social conscience. I do not believe that comes under vote 1905 or 1904.

1650

What comes under vote 1904 strikes me as perhaps the most important function of the Ministry of Housing, the community housing section, which deals mainly with three subissues. One is the creation of new affordable housing supply. There are the operations of the portfolio of some 84,000 units by the Ontario Housing Corp. and the development and implementation of various housing policies that have as their objective the protection of housing stock. Not much is said about the latter in the minister's speech.

I am curious that the vote that involves the most money has inspired the shortest preamble by the minister. He has confused me in that regard. The opening statement was only 14 pages long. Perhaps that happened because last week I was trying to predict how long the succeeding opening statements would be. The minister has tricked me on this one.

There are a number of advantages to being the Housing critic for the New Democratic Party. One is that we have much better policy to talk about than either of the other two parties. Another is that I get the benefit of, first, the minister's remarks and then the remarks of my colleague the member for Sudbury (Mr. Gordon), and in this case some remarks from the member for High Park-Swansea. It gives me an opportunity to collect the little thoughts I might have and to prepare wonderfully rhetorical remarks to share with the minister. Of course, I have done that.

The minister has not shared with us today stuff we have not heard before. I presume it is always possible during estimates that everything we hear we have heard some time previously during the year. The recitation of the wonderful job the Ministry of Housing is doing in the community housing section is indeed a wonderful job about which we have heard many times since the assured housing policy was announced in December 1985.

The member for Sudbury spent a lot of time doing some number-crunching as he looked at the ministry's estimates. I do not know that I totally agree with all the figures he shared with the Legislature and with the minister, but there is no question that under every vote there is a significant increase in expenditure by the minister. I am unlike the member for Sudbury—

Mr. Wildman: Good.

Mr. Reville: I am unlike the member for Sudbury; and unlike the member for Sudbury I object less to the increase under some of the votes than the proportion of the increase vis-à-vis one vote to another. Let me go back at that, because it is fairly mystifying. I have mystified even myself with that most recent group of sentences.

The community housing vote, 1904, shows an increase of about 43 per cent. It is an \$86-million increase in the program on last year's figure of \$198 million, for a total of \$284.5 million. It is good to see a 43 per cent increase. It would be better to see a much bigger increase. When compared to the increase in the Ontario building program, the increase in community housing is insignificant. It is 166 per cent under vote 1902, which we are not talking about now, but for purposes of comparison I would like to mention it and beg the indulgence of the chair to do that briefly.

The minister has announced over and over again during the course of the past year allocations for nonprofit housing and for private sector subsidies that, when added together, indicate a significant effort over and above those we have been used to in Ontario. This is obviously necessary. The problem that we are trying to solve in Ontario and that the minister and the Ministry of Housing are addressing in part has been a long time developing. There is no question that the problem cannot be solved instantly. There is also no question, at least in my view, that the increased effort in community housing by the Ministry of Housing is not nearly adequate.

On a number of occasions we have heard about Project 3,000. This is an additional 3,000 units about which the minister says he is extremely proud. I suggest to the minister that had he not announced Project 3,000, there would have been a mutiny in the Rent Review Advisory Committee and the minister would not have got any tenant support for Bill 51 from the members of the advisory committee.

The motivation for Project 3,000, however, is not very important to me. I am glad to see it is there. I note that the city of Toronto, on the

initiative of my friend, Alderman Barbara Hall, is prepared to try to get 1,000 of those units and lead a joint venture. The Toronto Non-Profit Housing Corp., with the assistance of the alternative housing subcommittee, is prepared to join with church groups and other agencies to try to deliver 1,000 of the minister's 3,000 units. That will be a significant help in delivering those units. I remain concerned that in terms of a delivery strategy for the balance of the units, it may be difficult to get the additional 2,000 units on stream in the next year.

My concern about the delivery capability and the role of the minister and the ministry in helping develop a delivery capability is that it has not been emphasized a great deal in any of the documentation I have seen from the Ministry of Housing. Development groups in Ontario have not had a lot of experience in delivering housing for the hard-to-house; nor has anyone anywhere in the world as far as I am aware. It behooves the government of Ontario, through the Ministry of Housing, to be very proactive in helping groups to develop their capability to put not only the hardware but also the software on the ground; that is, not only buildings but also programs of support that will help people find meaningful and hopeful lives inside the buildings.

This is not a criticism of the Ministry of Housing as such, because as I said, I do not know that anybody has a lot of experience in this regard. There has been some useful work done. There have been some pilot projects in which some lessons have been learned. I know those who have learned the lessons will be happy to share them with the ministry because the objective is to get appropriate housing on the ground and people in the housing as quickly as we can. If we do not do that, the pressure on the hostel system is going to continue to grow and the hostel system will continue to be misused. It is clearly being misused now as a form of permanent housing. That is not the point behind emergency shelters; they are ill suited to being permanent housing and to trying to deal with the populations they are trying to deal with.

1700

I realize there is another overlap here with the Ministry of Community and Social Services, but there are gaps in our emergency housing menu in terms of the needs for emergency housing for families not being adequately met. Currently and in the short term, the Ministry of Housing should be talking to the Ministry of Community and Social Services about how to deal with the need for more emergency beds for families.

There is also a need for interval, second-stage or transition housing. It is described by all those names. One of the dilemmas and one of the ironies is that if interval, transition or second-stage housing were to be developed in greater numbers, the program would not be able to meet its objectives particularly well, because there is nowhere for people to be in transit to. The shortage of affordable housing means that people must stay in transition housing permanently, which is a misuse of transition housing.

It is something that is of increasing concern, because our society has now realized it is inappropriate and unhealthy for a woman to stay in a household in which she or her children are being battered. The values of society have changed to the extent that we have now created an expectation that if a woman and her children are being beaten by their husband and father, society thinks it is appropriate for them to leave the family home and seek a better life elsewhere.

That was not always the case. There was, and there still is in some circles, a reluctance to break up the family unit in any circumstances. It is a cruel irony that on the one hand, as a society, we have said that if those are the conditions under which you are living you should leave the family home and try to build a new life elsewhere, and yet on the other hand there is little opportunity for someone to do that. Quite often, the only recourse a mother and her children have is to go back to the matrimonial home in which the problems were occurring and take their chances there.

All of us understand the need for improvements in transition housing and in the stock of affordable housing in general, so that after a woman and her family have been able to stabilize their lives somewhat in a transition atmosphere, they can go back into the marketplace and find accommodation that is both decent and affordable. That is not the case anywhere in Ontario in 1987, and that is an objective. There is no question that we have to turn that around. The way we are going to turn it around is to increase vastly the effort of the Ministry of Housing in Ontario.

The minister points out quite rightly that the best effort up to 1986-87 was 10,000 units in 1975-76. What the minister does not say is that, even while Ontario is increasing its contribution to the housing supply of the province, the federal government is reducing its effort and in net terms we are not that much farther ahead. While the behaviour of the federal government is not the responsibility of the Ontario Ministry of Hous-

ing, the fact that it is reducing its commitment to social housing means that in Ontario our net gain is less than it would have been, even though the problem we are trying to solve has increased.

The other question which has not been addressed by the minister's statement and which needs to be addressed is the relative success of the program he has announced in its various parts. Why not call it the 19,000 units? That makes it fairly simple, although 3,000 of those units will clearly come on stream between March 1987 and some time after in terms of being built. Many of the 16,000 are already under construction, we hope. One of the difficulties of getting a snapshot of how well we are doing is the time lag between the day of commitment of the units and the day a door opens and a tenant goes in. That will vary from project to project, and we will not know for some time whether all the delivery agencies will actually be able to deliver the units that they have been committed by the government.

The other thing we do not know as yet, and I hope the minister will provide this information either during this vote or perhaps on Thursday in the standing committee on public accounts when the convert-to-rent program is going to be taken to pieces, is in respect of the private sector subsidy programs on which the minister is relying to deliver about 11,000 units. I cannot remember: 5,000 convert-to-rent, 5,000 Renterprise—the numbers are here somewhere. We need to know in respect of those private sector programs the rent levels of the units that will be rented to unsubsidized tenants and the percentage of rent-geared-to-income that has been taken up.

The program design speaks of up to so many per cent; up to 40 per cent, I believe, can be sought under rent-geared-to-income. We need to know what actually happened in the as-built situation. Like programs of the past—ORCL, CORSP and CROP—these wonderful acronyms that make your tongue turn into a little spinneret, quite often we discovered that the rent-geared-to-income take-up was small indeed and the interest-free loans or grants were not utilized at all to deliver affordable housing.

There were two fairly startling omissions from the minister's opening remarks. Nothing much was said about home owners. I should have thought that a home ownership made easy type of program would be a good idea. There are several ways to deliver a home ownership made easy program at very low cost to the taxpayer. Given that there is a persistent myth in our society about

home ownership and given that there are some interesting features of home ownership that are quite remarkable and attractive, I am surprised that we have not seen from the Ministry of Housing a home ownership program that would make it easier for people to buy a home.

One of the neat things about having a mortgage when you are a home owner is that as you get older the percentage of your income that you pay for housing goes down. However, if you are a tenant, the percentage of income you pay for housing goes up. That is the amazing Reville crossover theory, which I did not just invent now, but I will take credit for it. It could be examined by the Ministry of Housing. The previous government had a pretty good program until it started to mess around with it at the resale end.

1710

Clearly, the development industry does not much want the government to be in a home ownership made easy program because the industry would then lose the advantage of all those speculative profits on land assembly and what not, but the people of Ontario would sure like it. If somebody could buy a house for \$80,000, put \$8,000 down and pay a spread of the difference between the prime rate and the bank rate for a mortgage, we would have a lot of people in home ownership. When they came to sell their homes, they could sell them back to the Minister of Housing, who could then sell them again. It would be a wonderful idea. We could do this on all this Ontario Land Corp. land. We could have a great time. There would be such demand that the price of lumber would go right through the roof. Some of the softwood lumber industry would think that is just fine.

The other thing the paper did not say anything about was the question of how we protect the existing housing stock. It did not give an assessment of how well Bill 11 is working after six months. I am disappointed that it did not give that because I would like to know whether it works. We know the city of York decided to approve 400 Walmer Road for condominium conversion. If my friend the member for High Park-Swansea had not left, I would have been happy to mention his concern about condominium conversion in the High Park area, but since he is not here, I will not mention that at all.

Mr. Shymko: I am here.

Mr. Reville: He just came back. Is it not amazing the way these things happen?

One wonders how many applications there have been to municipal councils under Bill 11;

how the municipal councils are handling them; how many approvals there have been; how many appeals to the Ontario Municipal Board there have been; whether there have been any appeals to cabinet; the disposition of all this incredible process; whether the bill works, and if not, how the minister will fix it when it runs out. That matter is of interest to me and to many others, including a whole gaggle of Progressive Conservatives who are laughing, chatting and having a great time as they wonder about the effects of Bill 11.

Mr. Callahan: Did you say a lot of Tories? There are not that many.

Mr. Reville: They are the most Tories I have seen in one group in a long time.

I did not have the Cadillac Fairview flip on my list, but I am happy to speak about it under vote 1905. I know the member for High Park-Swansea has asked the minister a question about vote 1905. He will probably come back to hear the answer to that and then he can hear me talk about Cadillac Fairview.

It is of interest in view of the fact that when the receiver, Clarkson Gordon, was trying to get the best price it could for people's homes, it entertained some double-barrelled offers from various investors. The price was so much for a rental unit and so much plus so much if the unit were converted. The investors very cleverly put a time limit on those offers. That time limit is just a bit longer than the life of Bill 11 and that worries me a lot.

I hope it is in the minister's mind, because if the receiver sees an opportunity to get an extra \$7,500 per unit and decides it would be really neat if those lumps of \$7,500 came trickling into the pot, then Bill 11, if it is still around, will be sorely tested. It would be time to have a position from the Ministry of Housing as to whether it thinks an extra \$7,500 or so per unit is the way to further a housing policy in Ontario or whether it is just a way to replenish the coffers of the Canada Deposit Insurance Corp. How do we measure and balance those two public interests? We will want some input from the Minister of Housing. From our point of view, we can suggest to the minister that the preservation of rental stock is more important than a few pieces of silver in the CDIC pot.

The whole question of the Ontario Housing Corp. as property manager and as the largest landlord in Ontario is an important question to me and it is a very important question to those who currently live in Ontario Housing and those who want to live in Ontario Housing. There are

very large numbers of people waiting to do just that.

By way of honey—I will do the honey first and the vinegar second—the honey is that I have seen, and I hope I continue to see, some encouraging changes in policy in the operation of the holdings of OHC. It is an encouraging move to see Mr. Greenspan as chairman of OHC. The interest he has in a more open process is encouraging to me. I was delighted to see my old colleague John Sewell hired. Imagine, a full-time chairman of the Metro Toronto Housing Authority; what a great idea. I have often scratched my head in wonderment as to why the Ministry of Housing would take unto its bosom a man who will clearly be into every nook and cranny in OHC and who will probably create no end of nervous days for bureaucrats.

I know Mr. Sewell believes that programs should be designed for people, not for bureaucrats. If I were a bureaucrat, I would want the program designed for me. Fortunately, I am not a bureaucrat and I know Mr. Sewell will be all over the place making sure that the way OHC deals with its tenants has a very impressive new face on it. That is a good idea.

Likewise, it is a good idea that 16- and 17-year-old parents will be eligible for housing. I spoke of this in my opening statement the other day. What is not a good idea is that the OHC portfolio has stayed the same size for a long time. I believe OHC should be building and I believe it should be building projects that are quite different from those it has built in the past. When it builds, it should build from moneys that are separate from the current social housing program. I do not think it would be useful for OHC to compete with the other third-sector providers, but I do believe it would be useful for OHC to become a dynamic housing corporation by adding to its stock, and it should do that in projects that are probably town house projects of maybe 30 or 40 units. I would really like to see that happen soon.

1720

I am worried, for instance, about the bricks and mortar of the portfolio of OHC. I assume there is a rehabilitation plan, but many of the units under the control of OHC are getting elderly and will need major refits of the services. There are even OHC projects that could use some drastic overhaul in relation to the streetscape, infrastructure and development that would have to be done in conjunction with the tenants in those projects, but there are some interesting and creative ways in which the existing portfolio

could be made more attractive, could be made to last longer and where some adjustments could be made that would improve the ambience of particular projects.

That is of particular importance in places such as Jane and Finch and in Regent Park, where the projects are very large. I can also think of some neat things the minister could do with Blake, which is in my riding, that would make it a more attractive and more livable project.

I applauded before and I will applaud again the appointment of Chimbo Poe-Mutuma as director of race relations. It is a good idea that OHC is finally developing some policies and programs to deal with the multiracial demography of its projects. It is something I am familiar with, having worked previously in Regent Park, where there is a large West Indian population and growing Chinese and Vietnamese populations. The relations between OHC staff and its tenants have not always been as sensitive to cultural differences as they should have been, and as I understand and believe OHC believes they should be. It is working towards improving understanding between OHC staff and the tenants the staff are there to serve. That is good stuff and that should be evaluated and developed so that we get the benefit from it that we should be getting.

There is no question the objectives of OHC have had to change over the years. In the days after the First World War—

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The member is not going back that far, is he?

Mr. Reville: I think the Treasurer will want to walk back in time to the days just after the first war, when legislators and municipal councillors were first beginning to understand that there was the need for social housing. This was just after the first war, when the Treasurer was first elected.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Why do we not give up on the next five hours and carry this?

Mr. Reville: He will remember the basis for a lot of the discussions about public housing.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: That is when they got all those terrible Toronto assessments.

Mr. Reville: It was in the days before the province was messing around in assessments, but it was not before the days when legislators and people of goodwill actually thought about housing the poor. During and after the first war, a group of philanthropists started the Toronto Housing Co.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: That was not legal then, was it?

Mr. Reville: There was a long debate in the House about philanthropy. Many members of the Tory party thought it should be illegal. Then there was the discussion of philately as well. They thought that should be illegal, but they did not discuss the other one, which is just as well, and we will not today.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: These guys from downtown Toronto are shocking.

Mr. Reville: If I could finish this point, at one time people thought the poor should have temporary housing, because as soon as they had temporary housing—this was after they thought the poor should have bathrooms—their lives would change and they would move out of the temporary housing into something in the private sector. They would buy a house, just as the member for Brant-Oxford-Norfolk (Mr. Nixon) did.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I never bought a house in my life.

Mr. Reville: I heard an apocryphal story that he was born in a calf pen, which is why he does not like to clean them out. I do not know whether that is true or whether that is a story about another saviour and another time.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I was born in a manger.

Mr. Reville: That is right. There were no stars at all. No one came with gifts of any kind when that birth happened.

Interjections.

Mr. Reville: I think this is out of control. The member for Sudbury said the Ministry of Housing was out of control; clearly the estimates are out of control. It is interesting that they got out of control only when the member for Sudbury East (Mr. Martel) and the member for Brant-Oxford-Norfolk came into the House. I do not know whether there is bad chemistry here. I was almost finished. Members should let me get through this statement.

I am irritated that the Treasurer, who has not sat through many minutes of these Housing estimates, is now getting restless just because I am making a speech. He is thinking back to his family connections and my family connections in that part of the country and is scratching his head, wondering how I could be making this speech, because he knows all my relatives. Fortunately, they are not here and I am.

An hon. member: Are you related to the judge?

Mr. Reville: The judge and I were close. The judge was my father and I was his son. That is right.

Mr. Shymko: Great logic there.

Mr. Reville: The member for High Park-Swansea will find, the more he listens to it, that New Democratic Party policy makes perfect sense.

I am a little worried about these advisory committees the ministry is setting up, representing various parts of the province, with demonstrated experience. I find these advisory committees are a way for the minister to avoid deciding anything. Months go past and during all of that time he says he must await advice from his advisory committee.

The previous time I accused the minister of having to wait for advice from his advisory committee, I got into trouble. I thought I would try to say it today and try to avoid getting into a lot of trouble; in fact, warn him that the more advisory committees are set up, the less that will get done. One of the ways he can take activists out of the play and prevent them from developing any housing or from putting any heat on the ministry is to put them on an advisory committee for ever. I hope that is not going to happen. I would like to know that the advisory committees have limited time lines, so their advice can be taken or not and the projects they recommend can be built or not. I want to say that because I get quite cross when all our activists are put on government advisory committees and we never see them again.

In conclusion, the minister states that Ontario has a moral obligation to the homeless and that a commitment must be made to do everything possible to shelter them. I agree the government does have a moral obligation to the homeless and should make a commitment to do everything possible to house them. I do not believe everything possible is being done, although I believe that some things are being done that show promise.

I urge the minister to add to the things being done that show promise, more things that should be done that will show promise. We have the skills and resources to ensure that no one need be homeless in the province. The minister should not rest—he should get up even earlier in the morning that he has already told us he does—in making sure that the programs and the funding and the commitment are in place, so no one is homeless and so people have a right to housing in reality, instead of just in rhetoric.

1730

Hon. Mr. Curling: I could not have said better the things the member stated about the accomplishments of the Ministry of Housing. As a matter of fact, I am not here to praise but to do, and that is what we are doing. I know the members of the opposition are not here to praise me, but they find it very difficult not to do so and they are doing so.

The member for Riverdale made some excellent suggestions and observations. He has raised a concern about the capabilities of delivery agents of the units we are putting on the market and whether the maintenance will be looked after properly. I assure the member we have taken those things into consideration and the staff is quite aware of that. We have been working very closely with the delivery agents to make them work the way they should work. We know too that we have to work very closely with the other ministries, the support services ministries such as the Ministry of Community and Social Services and the Ministry of Health, to make them more effective.

The member properly stated that my opening statement lacked mention of other programs. The reason for that was I had hoped—and that hope has happened—to allow the members to raise their points, to raise questions or to sing the praises of the Ministry of Housing. I am glad I have allowed them that time in which to raise those points. Otherwise, I could have relayed all the programs and what we have done.

The member raised another very important point. While we have increased our programs and rental units, the federal government has neglected to support those programs. We are delivering more now than in the past. Before I became the minister, we delivered only municipal nonprofit housing and now we are delivering some co-ops and private nonprofit housing. That in itself, I can tell both critics, caused us to increase staffing.

I want to make some quick comments on some of the points the member made. He mentioned home ownership. As we have seen in the past year or more, a very strong market was concentrated in home ownership. We are interested in home ownership; we are interested in the people who would like to own their own homes. We have a demonstration program and we hope to look at it very carefully as we go along, to enable those people who are not in the \$250,000 and \$150,000 market to purchase homes in those areas. I just want to indicate that we do have that

great interest. The industry was very strong in stimulating that kind of area.

The member saw where labour was rather scarce when the demand in the building industry was very great. To find more carpenters and masons would be extremely difficult; creating any more in the market to meet those demands would have given us a difficult task.

The member for Riverdale raised a point about the advisory groups that have been created or started under my regime. I was quite surprised that he took that slant. We are an open government. We listen to all people. We even asked the member himself and members on the other side for some comments so that we could bring about the best housing program we can. All the advisory groups we put in place have responded. They have sent in their reports, and we have acted upon them. Many of the groups and the members were quite surprised that we acted upon some of those recommendations. That is very unlike previous governments, which would have taken those reports or set up advisory groups that would never report.

Some people got up in the House this afternoon and commented on Mr. Grenier's remarks. Members can see we are not limited; we are quite objective in who we ask. We are not asking for people in advisory groups who support only the programs the government would like to put in place but also those who give us the other view. We act, not according to what they recommend, but according to what is best for Ontario. While some groups and some individuals have a strong philosophy of how it should go, we take into consideration all ideas and act in the best way we can. It is quite an open government.

I know it will take some time for the members across there to understand what is meant by open government. It is not only to open the door when people come in, talk and then say, "Thank you very much," shelving all those reports wherever we can, either in the machines that were bought or in the drawers; we also act upon them. We look at those recommendations, assess them and act accordingly. We did so with the Rent Review Advisory Committee, which was a historic achievement. I do not take credit for that; not at all. The capabilities and the individuals are within this province. All we have to do is to ask them, treat them like human beings and act upon their advice.

Members should not fear that we are using advisory groups to stall, take the heat off or anything else. We use advisory groups to take their recommendations, assess them and then go

in that direction. That is leadership. Leadership is not jumping ahead and doing what you feel like but assessing those ideas and moving forward.

In that sense, I do not fear to talk about the Commission of Inquiry into Residential Tenancies which was put in place. We know there are needs to be addressed, and I await the report of the Thom commission. I am confident that when it comes, members will realize we have acted in the proper manner.

I notice that some of the latecomers who were not here before would like to speak on these issues at this very late moment. I will sit down and give them a chance if they want to ask those questions. We are confident we are accountable for the direction we are going and the way we spend the taxpayers' money.

1740

Mr. Shymko: With regard to the fearless statement made by the minister, I want him to know that I am just going through the replies to a questionnaire that was sent to my constituents. Mr. Glanville of 544-A Annette Street in my riding says his concern is the following, and it is the only comment he makes: "Instead of talking about Sunday shopping and labelling, more affordable rental units are desperately needed, especially in our riding." What should I answer? "Fear not"? What has the minister done about this? Is "Fear not" the answer?

Interjections.

The Deputy Chairman: Order.

Hon. Mr. Curling: Does the member want a response?

Mr. Shymko: Yes.

Hon. Mr. Curling: Yes, he can say "Fear not," because the housing policy and the Ministry of Housing are in capable hands. We have a program in place that will address the need for affordable rental housing. However, again it is not an instant thing where we will see that the problems placed before us, the huge task that has been placed before me and the staff, will be addressed overnight.

The member can tell his constituent that his fear that it was not going to be addressed after years of inactivity—

Mr. Shymko: "Years of inactivity"? Let us be fair.

Hon. Mr. Curling: Again, it is terrible for me to lay blame, but as the member for Riverdale has stated, the 19,000 units we are bringing on stream will address the affordable rental units that were not there.

Mr. Shymko: What about the 25,000 units I referred to that will be eliminated from the rental market? What is the minister going to do about them?

Hon. Mr. Curling: The member knows too. I want to make this quick point. We have put all these in place, and while one wants to believe they will be built overnight, we know it takes about 15 to 18 months for them to be there. We have approved 19,000 in the 1985-86 fiscal year; the previous government had 6,000 units when we took over. The member can see that by going from 6,000 to 19,000, we are moving in the right direction. It is not enough to address that need, but we are moving in the direction of doing more and more under the five-year program of having 6,700 rental units on the market.

The Deputy Chairman: Is the member for High Park-Swansea satisfied with the answer?

Mr. Shymko: How can I be satisfied with an answer that is no answer? The attempts at eloquence by the minister are dismal. There is no answer whatsoever.

Mr. McFadden: I listened with interest to what the minister was saying—

Mr. Shymko: The member should shed some light on this.

Mr. McFadden: The member for High Park-Swansea says some light should be shed on this issue. I almost had a feeling the minister was hoping at one point a hallelujah chorus would burst into song as he patted himself on the back and told us to fear not.

I would like to deal with what I think is a substantive issue, rather than advisory boards and who is on them and fearing not. It relates to the vacancy rate in Toronto and what, in practical terms, the government should consider to help to deal with that problem.

It is safe to say all of us know of tenants currently living in apartments at very low rents relative to the rents of new buildings, for example, who make incomes of \$50,000, \$60,000, \$70,000 or \$80,000 a year. I am not taking that away from people. If they can get a bargain, they are probably entitled to get it. It is a legal thing to do. Nevertheless, one of the problems we face is that we have a shortage of affordable housing in Ontario, partly because people living in affordable units are people who could afford to own homes, to move out and thus make additional units available to the elderly and to people who need affordable housing.

I found it interesting today that the member for Riverdale spoke approvingly of the home owner-

ship made easy program, which was introduced by the previous government some time ago. I also found it interesting to read a recent article in Maclean's magazine which mentioned that in Cuba the government is virtually requiring tenants to buy their apartment units or housing units, whether they be apartment units or small houses.

One thing that does not appear to be in the government's planning to date is a program to encourage people to buy their homes. There are many families with children, single-parent families and young families with both parents, who would love to get out of apartments to live in homes if they could afford it. As I mentioned, many of the affordable units are currently occupied by people who could well afford to buy homes.

We know the difficulty in Toronto of securing additional affordable housing units through the private sector. The construction costs, land costs and everything else are very high. Everybody who is aware of the housing market will agree that the very serious problem we are facing is that even if we were to get additional units of housing built in Toronto, much of it, if not all of it, unless it were public housing, would probably have rental rates starting at \$700, \$800, \$900 for a small single-bedroom unit, and even well above that.

It seems to me, therefore, that one of the ways to assist in providing additional units of affordable housing is to have tenants who can afford to buy homes move out of those units, thus freeing up units that could be available for senior citizens and others who are having trouble finding units of an affordable nature.

In Eglinton riding, for example, every week we have people stopping by my community help centre seeking housing. They do not qualify for public housing but, on the other hand, they cannot afford to pay \$1,500 or \$2,000 a month. I can only advise them to get their name on a list for existing buildings, keep an eye on the newspapers and offer to keep their name on file in my office in case we hear of something. We virtually never hear of affordable housing coming on the market, although the odd time somebody will phone in and let us know. For many people, finding affordable housing in Toronto has become a very serious and nerve-racking experience.

I urge the minister to look very seriously at programs that could be put in place in the near future to encourage people of all ages to buy their own home, be it a condominium, detached or

semi-detached home, to make available affordable housing, which today is occupied by people who could afford a home. People might find their way clear to move out of an affordable housing unit, thus making more affordable housing available to the people who have a tremendous need for that kind of housing and cannot find it today.

1750

Hon. Mr. Curling: It is unfortunate that the member was not here earlier on when we went through some of the programs we are doing. I am sure he is familiar with most of the programs of the Ministry of Housing. He asks what we are doing. I want quickly to state that first we have to protect those rental units we have; the affordable ones are rather scarce. Bill 11 was introduced to do that. The member for Riverdale stated he would like to know what would be the life of Bill 11. We are confident with our supply program—I will come to that shortly. He also knows of our commitment to discourage escalating rents. We had Bill 7 and Bill 51, which looked at rent control, the rent review process, to maintain the increase in rents at a manageable rate.

I have stated over and over in the House about our supply program. I remember the shadow member, the shadow minister—I mean the member for Don Mills (Mr. Timbrell), who from time to time drops in here—stated that no one—

Mr. Gordon: Be nice.

Hon. Mr. Curling: I was trying to be. He stated that no one will build. Now who is going to? I tried to do a bit of research—with all the work I have—to find out what he said. He said, “Name one of the private sector who will build.” When we advertised the Renterprise program, many of those in the private sector wanted to go into that program. As a matter of fact, we had a second call. When we looked at the north, people from the north felt they were excluded. We did make a call to accommodate that.

The supply sector program we have put in place is working. The convert-to-rent program is excellent. I went to the riding of the member for Sudbury; the convert-to-rent program was excellent. I went to a school there that had been converted to rental units. It is an excellent program; it has been applauded all over. We will continue to fine-tune it, as we do all programs, to make it address those in need.

Mr. Gordon: Give me a plug now.

Hon. Mr. Curling: We know the honourable critic worked pretty hard to make sure we addressed those needs. The member for Eglinton

(Mr. McFadden) also has great concern about the seniors. He can tell his constituents that they are in capable hands, with capable staff, and that we will address those concerns as we go along. We cannot really solve the problems laid down for all these years, but I am sure, as the members have said, we are moving in the right direction. Let them give us another 42 years and see what happens.

Mr. McFadden: Briefly, the actual question I was concerned about having the minister address was about programs in relation to the encouragement of home ownership. It seems to me one of the values that has been key to the strength of our society is home ownership, the permitting of people to feel that ultimately they can own their own home and raise their children in their own home. It seems to me that is a value we should be fostering in our society. I raise it in the context of this debate because my feeling is that there are people currently living in rental accommodation who would love to own their own homes and could move out of affordable units into homes they would own and be able to build up equity in.

I was urging the minister not necessarily to come up with more programs to create more rental housing—there are programs out there, and we urge him to do more in that area—but to consider programs that would encourage people to move into a situation where they could afford to own their own homes. That is a value we should be fostering in our society. People of all ages want to own their own homes. I was suggesting that the minister consider, either through his own ministry or by recommendation to the Treasurer, programs that encourage home ownership for people of all ages.

Hon. Mr. Curling: The member knows the home ownership program is working very well. We have broken every record. I do not know how far back we could go, but we can talk about the way the home-building industry has been behaving during the past 18 months or two years. If I ask the Treasurer to stimulate that part of the industry, I think I would be quite successful—I know how the Treasurer behaves—in addressing those needs in the rental area, because home ownership is doing very well.

I am giving a warning to the Treasurer while he is here that I will be asking him to come up with a very aggressive housing strategy to bring affordable rental units to the people. I do not think we need to stimulate the home ownership industry.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: We do not want to be overstimulated.

Hon. Mr. Curling: That is right.

Mr. Sheppard: Since the minister agreed with the member for Riverdale, I would like to ask him what he is doing about granny flats in Ontario. I understand the previous government had three pilot projects. Where has the present Minister of Housing left those three pilot projects?

Nobody is looking for housing more than people in the great riding of Northumberland. We have a housing shortage in Brighton, Cobourg, Port Hope, Campbellford, Warkworth and Hastings. I want to know what the minister is doing with regard to granny flats, because I have had several requests. People thought it was a super idea. Now I am waiting for this great government that the minister is talking about, which he says is doing everything for housing. What is the minister doing about the granny flats?

Hon. Mr. Curling: There are two and maybe three points to the question. First, if the honourable member had been here when I went

into great detail about the status of granny flats, he would have known I talked about how we have 12 granny-flat units in the demonstration process around the province. We will be assessing those in the next six to nine months. We will be thinking about the affordability of the demonstration projects. We are looking at the cobwebs, the problems, the community acceptance and all those things that we can assess; whether we can really afford these units and whether we will get our money's worth from such a program.

Granny flats have been quite popular. People have asked for them. Within the next nine months, we may be able to give the member an update on where we will be going, whether we will go at all and whether it is practical. I hope that answers the member's question.

On motion by Hon. Mr. Nixon, the committee of supply reported progress.

The House adjourned at 6 p.m.

APPENDIX

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS IN ORDERS AND NOTICES

COURIER SERVICES

385. Mr. Barlow: Would each minister provide all details for any courier contracts held by the ministry since June 26, 1985; specifically, the total amount of the contracts, the criteria for cost per item, the criteria for use, the frequency used, the approval required for use? [Tabled October 15, 1986]

Hon. Mr. Conway: The Ministry of Government Services establishes collective purchasing arrangements (standing agreements) with suppliers of courier services on behalf of the Ontario government. These may be used by ministries on an optional basis. A standing agreement is a contractual agreement established through the tendering process on behalf of all or several ministries/agencies for a specified good or service. The supplier then provides the product or service for a specified time at a guaranteed price.

The following courier companies were awarded contracts by the Ministry of Government Services during the period in question. The names of the companies and the amounts expended are listed under the contract period.

Commencing November 1, 1983, and ending October 31, 1985 (only the period June 26, 1985, to October 31, 1985, is included): Purolator, \$941,313; Priority Post, \$816,762; Kingsway Courier, \$3,636; Connections, \$20,307; Penny Express, \$13,239.

Commencing November 1, 1985, and ending October 31, 1987 (the period included is November 1, 1985, to September 30, 1986): Purolator, \$2,457,499; Priority Post, \$2,605,855; Swift Sure, \$170,497; Connections, \$62,044; Penny Express, \$16,593; Rabbits, \$22,060.

The cost per item is based on a minimum charge per shipment up to 10 pounds for Purolator and five kilograms for Priority Post plus additional charges for extra weight. Reports on frequency of use are available for only two companies, Purolator and Priority Post.

Number of pieces delivered: Purolator, 1,767,940; Priority Post, 1,641,408.

Courier contracts are divided into four distinct categories: International service provided by Swift Sure; provincial service provided by Purolator, Priority Post and Kingsway Courier; overnight service to Metro provided by Connec-

tions; same-day local delivery service (four hours) provided by Penny Express and Rabbits Delivery Service.

Approval systems are determined by each ministry.

The contracts listed above are administered by the Ministry of Government Services on behalf of the government. They cover an estimated 98 per cent of courier deliveries made under contractual arrangements by all ministries. We are also seeking contract information from the ministries which we hope to have available after January 26, 1987.

NORDEV PROGRAM

523. Mr. Pierce: Would the acting Minister of Northern Development and Mines provide the names and addresses of successful Nordev grant applicants since August 1, 1986? [Tabled December 8, 1986]

Hon. Mr. Peterson: Brian Madge, secretary-treasurer, Madgical's Pro-Shop Inc., 407 Victoria Avenue East, Thunder Bay, Ontario, P7C 1A6; Rollie Hammerstedt, president, Redditt Aviation Inc., Box 87, Redditt, Ontario, P0X 1M0; Ms. Edna Ruth McClain, president, McClain's "Designer Accessories for the Home-maker," Box 185, Atikokan, Ontario, P0T 1C0; William Hodgson, Hodgson Saw and Knife, 222 Main Street South, Callander, Ontario; Victor Roy, Roy's Lumber and Mining Timber Ltd., Box 100, Britt, Ontario; Paul Villgren, Paul Villgren Inc., 2122 Algonquin Road, Sudbury, Ontario, P3E 4Z6; Robert Osleeb, XTSEA Boats, Box 915, North Bay, Ontario.

Tony Dionisi, A. B. McLean Ltd., 8 Brock Street, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, P6A 3B2; Roland Rainville, Valley Growers Inc., Box 40, Blezard Valley, Ontario, P0M 1E0; Wayne Gartshore, Canadian Shield Spring Water Co. Ltd., 62 Thornloe Crescent, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, P6A 4J3; Lloyd F. Redsky Sr., Kejick, Ontario, P0X 1E0; Joe Pitchenese, Wabigoon Lake Band 27, Box 39, Dinorwic, Ontario, P0V 1P0; A. Symons, Pickerel Lake Lodge, RR 2, Burk's Falls, Ontario, P0A 1C0; Michael E. Swanger, Mel Wel Lodge Ltd., Box 250, Thessalon, Ontario, P0R 1L0.

René Pelissier, Elk Cabins, Box 38, Elk Lake, Ontario, P0J 1G0; Bill Oshynko, Gold Pines Camp, Box 9, Ear Falls, Ontario, P0V 1T0;

Allan V. Reid, Lake Herridge Lodge, RR 1, Temagami, Ontario, P0H 1H0; Wayne Edmison, Riverside Lodge, 860 Quesne Road, RR 1, Sturgeon Falls, Ontario, P0H 2G0; Daniel R. Lécuyer, Lécuyer's Resort Ltd., Box 55, Nestor Falls, Ontario, P0X 1K0; Roy Bennett, Camp Kenda, Box 133, Gogama, Ontario, P0M 1W0; Dino Santi, Bay View Lodge, French River, RR 1, Alban, Ontario, P0M 1A0.

Donald M. Spencer, Spencer's Pineland Resort, General Delivery, Marten River, Ontario, P0H 1T0; John Thériault, John Thériault Air Ltd., Box 269, Chapleau, Ontario, P0M 1K0; Clifford E. Santa, Clif's Wilderness Camp, Box 28, Site 44, RR 1, Vermilion Bay, Ontario, P0V 2V0; Peter Ritchie, General Delivery, Biscotasing, Ontario, P0M 1C0; Gérard Bédard, president, Beauséjour Hotel Cottages, RR 1, Alban, Ontario, P0M 1A0; W. D. McCord, Maynard Lake Lodge Ltd., c/o Walsten Air Service, Box 2430, Kenora, Ontario, P9N 3X8; Harold Dicken, Shooting Star Camp, Metagama, Ontario, P3A 2A0; Lawrence Maksymetz, McCusker Lake Camp, Box 844, Red Lake, Ontario, P0V 2M0; Ms. Sue Dobson Green, Kenora Prospectors and Miners Ltd., 766 Balboa Drive, Mississauga, Ontario.

Norman Proulx, president, Garog Sure-Drive Door Operator Inc., 1297 Kelly Lake Road, Unit 1, Sudbury, Ontario, P3C 5P5; John Lautzenhiser, president, Global Research Ltd., RR 1, Nobel, Ontario, P0G 1G0; P. Villgren, Sling-Choker Mfg. (Hemlo) Ltd., 2122 Algonquin Road, Sudbury, Ontario, P3E 4Z6; Ambrose Raftis, Black Bridge Woodworking, RR 1, Charlton, Ontario, P0J 1B0; Takis Katsiapis, Christa Beef Packers, 755 Wallace Road, North Bay, Ontario, P1A 3X3; Lewis Hampel, Hampel-Gibson Forest Products Ltd., Box 734, Highway 11 North, North Bay, Ontario; Daniel Paulfranz, Nu Way Radiator, 693 Fisher Street, North Bay, Ontario, P1B 2E7.

Larry Andrews, president, Loring Manufacturing, Lot 27, Concession 14, Mills Township, Loring, Ontario, P0H 1S0; Aurel Rivet, Thos. Farquhar and Sons Co. Ltd., Little Current, Ontario, P0P 1K0; James F. Siltala, president, Neon North, Box 699, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, P6A 5N2; Donald J. Cull, Mr. Bagel Inc., 176 Elm Street West, Sudbury, Ontario; Louis Veilleux, Les Pneus Veilleux Tire Sales Inc., 11 Sheppard, Kapuskasing, Ontario; C. A. Hinsperger, Hinspergers Poly Industries Ltd., 645 Needham Lane, Mississauga, Ontario, L5A 1T9; Tony Dionisi, A. B. McLean Ltd., 8 Brock Street, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, P6A 3B2.

James Fenlon, Esnagi Lodge Inc., Box 58, Wawa, Ontario, P0S 1K0; Douglas White, Auld Reekie Lodge, Gowganda, Ontario, P0J 1J0; Mrs. Marilyn Hawcuit (Kenlea Camp, Pointe au Baril), 698 Spring Gardens Road, Burlington, Ontario, L7T 1J3; P. Keenan, Fin and Feather Resort, General Delivery, Eagle River, Ontario, P0V 1S0; W. E. Nevills, Box 25, Golden Valley, Ontario, P0H 1N0; Alex Rheault, Bayview Lodge, Box 24, Minaki, Ontario, P0X 1J0; G. Worrall, Nungesser Lake Lodge, Box 421, Red Lake, Ontario, P0V 2M0; Les Schultz, Woman River Camp, Box 593, Ear Falls, Ontario, P0V 1T0.

Ted Kaemingh, T. J. Kaemingh and Sons Ltd., Emo, Ontario, P0W 1E0; Kendall Lundy, Nickel Lake Lumber, 913 Crowe Avenue, Fort Frances, Ontario, P9A 2M1; Russ Buckingham, 2140 Regent Street South, Sudbury, Ontario, P3E 5S8; Robert Wright, Wrightway Sportswear Ltd., 1415 Main Street North, Callander, Ontario, P0H 1H0; Donald McDougald, Lake of the Woods Electric (Kenora) Ltd., RR 1, Airport Road, Kenora, Ontario, P9N 3W8; Ms. Theresa Patterson, Patlaw Optical Lab, 229 Scott Street, Fort Frances, Ontario; William J. C. Stanley, Armstrong Welding, Box 65, Armstrong, Ontario, P0T 1A0; Peter Kenny, president, Neelon Casting Ltd., 1 Foundry Street, Box 2007, Station A, Sudbury, Ontario, P3A 4R8.

J. Brueggeman, Perch Lake Resort and Outfitters, Box 907, Atikokan, Ontario, P0T 1C0; Dauglas K. Whiting, Nor-Shor Fishing Charter's, Suite 45, 151 Court Street, Thunder Bay, Ontario, P1A 4V3; J. A. McRae, Riverland Tent and Trailer Camp, Box 98, Madawaska, Ontario, K0J 2C0; Tom Cappel, Tikinagan Camp, Box 946, RR 1, Sioux Lookout, Ontario, P0V 2T0; Verne Hollett, Slate Falls Outposts, Box 750, Sioux Lookout, Ontario, P0V 2T0; Terry L. Shannon, Albany River Outfitters Ltd., Box 336, Pickle Lake, Ontario, P0V 3A0; D. Rainville, Panorama Camp, RR 1, Avenue du Lac Rd., Lavigne, Ontario, P0H 1R0.

Ms. Sue Johnson, Kenora Outpost Camps, Box 475, Kenora, Ontario, P9N 3X5; Reino Makela, Lauzon Aviation Co. Ltd., Box 1750, Blind River, Ontario, P0R 1B0; Fred Goff, Goff's Pakwash Camp, RR 2, Bruce, WI 54819; Evert A. and Jennie E. Cummer, Ejay's Portage Bay Camp, Highway 804, Box 490, Ear Falls, Ontario, P0V 1T0; David D. Denzler, Fisherman's Cove, Box 98, Ear Falls, Ontario, P0V 1J0; Roland Schreiner, Scout Lake Camp, Box 430, Ear Falls, Ontario, P0V 1T0; R. J. Tétreault, Timbermark Resort Ltd., Highway

17, English River, Ontario; E. Tormasy, Wolseley Lodge, RR 1, Box 8, Noelville, Ontario, P0M 2N0; Jack Richardson, French River Lodge Inc., RR 2, Alban, Ontario, P0M 1A0.

COMPENSATION FOR VACCINE-ASSOCIATED INJURIES

524. Mr. Pierce: Would the Minister of Health provide the reply to the request by the Department of National Health and Welfare's National Advisory Council on Immunization for the establishment of a no-fault compensation plan for vaccine-damaged children? [Tabled December 8, 1986]

Hon. Mr. Elston: The proposal of the National Advisory Council on Immunization for a vaccine-associated compensation plan for Canada has been discussed at the most recent federal-provincial meetings of both the ministers and deputy ministers of health, respectively.

Action following these discussions included asking Dr. Frank Sellers to consider this issue in the context of his work for the Minister of

National Health and Welfare on health care liability in Canada. Compensation for vaccine-associated injuries is an important facet of health care liability.

A consultation meeting was held in Toronto with Dr. Sellers and interested bodies and the compensation plan was discussed in relation to general concerns about health care liability. Dr. Sellers will be meeting with all the provinces before developing recommendations.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT COUNSELLING CENTRES

525. Mr. Jackson: Would the Minister of Skills Development provide a list of all youth employment counselling centres which began operations since April 1, 1986, their sponsoring agencies and which of them has received funding for the Futures program as of December 8, 1986? [Tabled December 9, 1986]

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: The youth employment counselling centres that began their operations during the period of April 1, 1986, to December 9, 1986, and their sponsors are listed below:

Centre	Sponsor
Burlington YMCA Youth Employment Service	Hamilton and Burlington YMCA
St. Thomas Youth Employment Counselling Centre	YMCA of Elgin/St. Thomas
Career House for Youth (Lindsay)	Sir Sandford Fleming College of Applied Arts and Technology
St. Christopher House Youth Employment Counselling Centre	St. Christopher House
Kettle Point Youth Employment Service (Forest)	Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point Band Council
Six Nations Youth Employment Counselling Centre	Special Services for Special People

Only St. Christopher House has received Futures funding as of December 8, 1986.

526. Mr. Jackson: Would the Minister of Skills Development provide the written guidelines for approval of Futures funding to youth employment counselling centres in existence prior to April 1, 1986, the written guidelines for those established after April 1, 1986, and if there are no written guidelines, the policies for approving Futures funds for new YECCs particularly with respect to length of time of operation? [Tabled December 9, 1986]

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: The process of determin-

ing Futures funding for youth employment counselling centres has remained unchanged since the start of the program, November 4, 1985. The process requires that an application form for funding be completed and submitted by YECCs to my ministry, and thereafter an analysis of the application is undertaken by ministry staff.

There are no requirements that a YECC must be operational for a certain period of time prior to applying for Futures funding. The principles for approval include, inter alia, community needs,

proposed arrangements for program delivery, cost-effectiveness, relationships with other service providers and past history. Additional considerations for first-time applicants include the extent of core YECC activities already in place, facility and administration arrangements, the capacity to deliver Futures (including the provision of assessments, workshops and upgrading) and relationships with other Futures offices particularly with regard to the establishment of cross-referral mechanisms.

NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT COUNCILS

529. Mr. Pierce: Would the acting Minister of Northern Development and Mines provide details of the chairman of the Northern Development Councils' budget, including the travel component of his budget? [Tabled December 9, 1986]

Hon. Mr. Peterson: All expenditures associated with the Northern Development Councils, including the Chairmen's Advisory Committee, are funded from the northern development fund. On May 3, 1986, CCND approved a total of \$1,342,000 over three years to fund operations of the councils.

No specific budget has been established for the Chairmen's Advisory Committee. The expenses of individual chairmen of the various regional councils are charged to their council's budget.

The chairman, René Fontaine, receives no salary or per diem allowance but is reimbursed for expenses incurred in the performance of his duties, as approved by the Deputy Minister of Northern Development and Mines. The salary and expenses of a special assistant will also be charged to the fund. The ministry will ensure that Mr. Fontaine will have sufficient secretarial and logistical help for the purposes of his assignment and be provided with staff assistance to obtain information and analyses of data under appropriate rules and procedures of the ministry.

ONTARIO HONOURS AND AWARDS SECRETARIAT

530. Mr. Guindon: Would the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs provide the operating budget for the Ontario honours and awards secretariat, including a detailed breakdown of expenditures; all staff members, including title, salary and duties; the means by which the staff members were recruited, including all advertising; the breakdown of all positions; including classified, secondments, contracts? [Tabled December 11, 1986]

Hon. Mr. Peterson: The 1986-87 operating budget and the expenditures as of November 30, 1986, for the Ontario honours and awards secretariat are as follows:

	Budget	Expenditures
Salaries and wages	\$73,000	\$30,239
Benefits	\$12,800	\$ 5,076
Transportation and communications	\$48,200	\$ 8,722
Services	\$80,000	\$19,801
Supplies and equipment	\$20,700	\$16,195

The secretariat has a complement of two positions, both of which are classified. The staff members were transferred from the Ministry of Government Services and their title, salary and duties are as follows:

	H. Bourke	P. Edwards
Title:	Co-ordinator, medals program	Medals program clerk
Salary (PA):	\$36,913-\$43,865	\$18,923-\$20,803
Duties:	administrative management, of the honours and awards secretariat	clerical and secretarial duties in support of the program

FIRST-AID TRAINING

532. Mr. Wildman: Would the Minister of Health provide a list of all the volunteer first-response teams in northern Ontario which have applied to date in the 1986-87 fiscal year for CPR and first-aid training under the ministry's emergency care programs, indicating which teams will receive the requested training in this fiscal year? If not all volunteer first-response

teams which have requested training will receive it in this fiscal year, will the minister please provide details as to the length of time the teams must wait to obtain this training? [Tabled December 16, 1986]

Hon. Mr. Elston: Listed below are the volunteer first-response teams in northern Ontario and the status of CPR and first-aid training requests:

Team	Status of Request
1. Assinagak	First-aid training to commence in January 1987; CPR—a CPR instructor is on staff of this team
2. Capreol	No request
3. Cockburn Island	No request
4. Elk Lake	No request
5. Goulais River	No request
6. Loring	No request
7. Larder Lake	No request
8. Searchmount	No request
9. Tehkummah	No request
10. Markstay	No request
11. Mattice	Request received first aid and CPR completed by local training officials; emergency first-response course completed in October 1986
12. Virginiatown	No request
13. St. Charles	No request
14. Meldrum Bay	No request
15. Hawk Junction	No request
16. Arrow Lake	No request
17. Graham	No request
18. Grassy Narrows	Course on emergency first response completed June 12, 1986
19. Gull Bay	No request
20. Mattabi Mines	No request
21. Minaki	First aid and CPR completed May 11, 1986
22. O'Connor township	CPR completed March 15, 1986; first aid completed April 20, 1986; emergency first response completed May 26, 1986
23. Oxdrift	Emergency first response completed November 27, 1986
24. Rossport	No request
25. South Gillies	CPR completed May 29, 1986
26. Vermilion Bay	No request

INTERIM ANSWER

531. Mrs. Grier: Hon. Mr. Bradley—The ministry will require additional time to answer the question. The answer should be available on or about January 20, 1987.

RESPONSES TO PETITIONS

EQUALITY RIGHTS LEGISLATION

Sessional paper 261, re inclusion of sexual orientation in section 18 of Bill 7.

Hon. Mr. Scott: The Human Rights Code prohibits discrimination with respect to goods,

services, facilities, accommodation and employment. The code's purpose is to ensure that individuals are treated equally and on the basis of their individual merit or ability, without regard to stereotypical assumptions based on race, gender, religion, age, marital or family status, or handicap. Adding sexual orientation as a ground of discrimination in the code will serve this same purpose. It will prevent people from being denied housing services or employment on the basis of their sexual orientation rather than their individual merit as employees or neighbours.

This government has no plans to redefine the

family in Ontario legislation to include unmarried couples of the same sex. The amendment will in no way "destroy the concept of the family" or interfere with existing family relationships.

CONDOMINIUM LEGISLATION

Sessional paper 269, re assessment of condominiums.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: On December 4, 1986, I introduced in the Legislature an amendment to the Assessment Act which will reinstate the freeze on the assessments of condominium properties and require them to be assessed on the same basis as single-family residences. The freeze, imposed on the assessments of all properties in Ontario in 1971, was removed for condominium properties only in 1984 by a ruling of the Divisional Court. Since that time, the Ministry of Revenue has had to reassess condominiums annually.

Condominium owners will of course retain the right to appeal if they believe their assessments to be too high.

TRAFFIC LIGHTS

Sessional paper 271, re installation of traffic signal at intersection of Highways 546 and 17 in Iron Bridge.

Hon. Mr. Fulton: Both the Ministry of Transportation and Communications regional office in Thunder Bay and the district office in Sault Ste. Marie were made aware of the concerns of the citizens of Iron Bridge regarding the intersection of Highway 17 and 546 in early September.

An engineering investigation was carried out by the ministry staff which revealed that a sight restriction existed on the south approach of this intersection, which is Mississagi Crescent, caused by a nearby bridge rail. Various options for alleviating this condition were considered. Due to the low traffic volume using the intersection, it was concluded that a traffic signal would not be appropriate.

On December 8, a letter was sent to the village of Iron Bridge from the district engineer in Sault Ste. Marie outlining the results of the investigation and recommending, as the most viable solution to the problem, the designation of a short portion of Mississagi Crescent as a one-way street southbound. Northbound traffic would be accommodated on an adjacent street, which intersects Highway 17 in a more advantageous location. The village has been asked to consider

this option as the one most appropriate to correct the situation.

RENT REVIEW

Sessional paper 275, re limiting rent increase to four per cent.

Hon. Mr. Curling: The maximum increase to rents without government approval has been four per cent during the period from August 1, 1985, up to January 1, 1987.

The Rent Review Advisory Committee, in its April 18, 1986, report to the minister, recommended the introduction of a flexible guideline linked to the cost of operating a well-run rental building. The concern of this group of tenants and landlords was not just to keep rents as low as possible but to ensure that buildings were properly maintained and that tenants have a choice of accommodation through new supply.

I accepted the advice of the advisory committee. Bill 51, the Residential Rent Regulation Act, which received royal assent on December 4, 1986, incorporated the residential-complex cost index. The 1987 residential-complex cost index is 5.2 per cent. This is the lowest guideline for rent review since 1975 with the exception of the period since August 1, 1985. It is anticipated that if inflation remains steady, the 1988 guideline will be lower than in 1987.

I am confident that the many features of the new rent review act—e.g., the rent registry, costs no longer borne and the inclusion of all rental stock—will work to the long-term benefit of tenants.

SUNDAY TRADING

Sessional paper 312, re stores remaining open on Sunday.

Hon. Mr. Keyes: The government appreciated receiving the views of the petitioners in support of the Retail Business Holidays Act and its purposes.

The legislation has been conclusively upheld as constitutional and valid by the decision of the Supreme Court of Canada on December 18, 1986. The prosecution of outstanding charges can now proceed. Also, police forces have been advised to continue to enforce the law and lay charges when violations occur.

The government intends to have the legislation reviewed, since it involves widespread social and economic issues that affect people throughout the entire province.

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Government
Publications



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Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 33rd Parliament
Tuesday, January 20, 1987

Speaker: Honourable H. A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday, January 20, 1987

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

CANCER TREATMENT COSTS

Mr. Andrewes: A group of southwestern Ontario parents whose children are suffering from cancer have had to shoulder the added burden of raising money to cover the cost of their children's medical care not covered by the province. Every year they are faced with having to raise more than \$47,000 to pay for the salary of a fellow to assist Dr. Barrie de Veber, director of paediatric haematology oncology at the Children's Hospital of Western Ontario.

The fellow, a fully trained paediatrician gaining a specialty in childhood cancer, performs most of the treatments and allows Dr. de Veber to perform other duties such as teaching, consulting with parents and attending to patients in hospital.

The parents' group, which was formed 12 years ago, faces the yearly challenge of raising the necessary funds to pay for a fellow. They are now looking for assistance from the government for ongoing funding.

About 125 children use the paediatric cancer service regularly, with the patient load increasing steadily. Is it fair that we leave these parents, who have to face the emotional turmoil of this situation, holding the bag?

The announcement by the Ministry of Health that 200 post-graduate training positions will be cut across the province over the next five years offers very little comfort.

PLANT SHUTDOWN

Mr. Breagh: I have been asked to read into the record here at Queen's Park a telegram from John Sinclair, president of Local 222 of the Canadian Automobile Workers, to the leader of the official opposition, the member for St. Andrew-St. Patrick (Mr. Grossman):

"I would ask you, as leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, to demand from one of your members, Sam Cureatz, MPP, Durham East, an apology for callous remarks made in Oshawa This Week newspaper Sunday, January 18, 1987. Mr. Cureatz's remarks not only are

insulting to employees of Cadbury's but also show his lack of concern in trying to save the jobs of these employees, many of whom live in his riding.

"I urge you, in your capacity as leader of the Progressive Conservatives, to demand an apology from Mr. Cureatz for the Cadbury workers and to assist us in trying to save the jobs of the Cadbury employees in Whitby."

To quote quickly the references here, the member for Durham East apparently sees some connection between the passage of Bill 7 and the closure of the plant in Whitby. The workers fail to see the connection.

It is complicated by his having been further quoted in the Oshawa Times as saying he did not attend the information meeting for Cadbury workers because neither the plant nor the affected workers are in his riding.

ROAD CONDITIONS

Mr. Eves: The Minister of Transportation and Communications (Mr. Fulton) and the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio) will be aware of the issue I bring before the House today, namely, Daventry road in the riding of Parry Sound and the lack of co-operation which these two ministries have displayed in this affair. This road was rebuilt by the Algonquin Forestry Authority to haul timber out of the north end of Algonquin Park. The trucks hauling these heavy loads drive along Calvin township's roads and are causing serious deterioration in the roads. Calvin township cannot bear the burden of upgrading and maintenance of the road, nor should it.

The northern Ontario resources transportation committee is prepared to fund 50 per cent of the cost of upgrading the roads. Its criteria state that the Algonquin Forest Authority must participate in the upgrading cost. However, to date, the Minister of Natural Resources will not accept any responsibility for these costs, nor will the Algonquin Forestry Authority, which is under his jurisdiction. I call upon both these ministers to co-operate with each other to assist Calvin township by providing the necessary funding to maintain and upgrade the township's roads.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mr. R. F. Johnston: In October 1981, the member for Bellwoods (Mr. McClellan) and I found 20 homeless people sleeping in the stairwells of the city hall garage in Toronto. How things have changed in the six years since then. Employables on welfare are still about 100 per cent to 200 per cent higher now than they were at that time. Amidst the poverty, there is incredible wealth. Jaguar sales are higher than they have ever been. At the recent boat show, boats were selling for \$180,000 each.

Last year at this time, I requested an overall review of the social assistance system. This Friday at Toronto city hall, five members of this caucus will be making a presentation to the Social Assistance Review committee. We will be laying out a vision of a total overhaul of the social assistance system in the province. We hope to give people power over their lives for the first time and a real chance to participate in our society. We believe our presentation will stand as a challenge to the other parties in this House to lay out before the people of Ontario their ideas of what the future of poverty issues in this province should be. We encourage the other two parties to respond in kind.

PLANT SHUTDOWN

Mr. Cureatz: In the one minute and 26 seconds I have, I would like to comment on what the member for Oshawa (Mr. Breaugh) brought forward in the House. I will read from the article, if he is not too embarrassed to take that. It says:

"As far as I am concerned, the executive of the UAW is not taking the responsibility that it should be taking. What it should be doing is arranging a meeting with Bob Rae and finding out what Bob Rae is going to do about the closure."

"Mr. Cureatz contends that, because a controversial item concerning gay rights was passed in December 'because Bob Rae and Mike Breaugh wanted it,' something should also be done for the workers of Cadbury."

"He went on to say that although the plant is not in his riding, he is concerned about the employees."

"Now we have another controversial item and I want to know what the NDP are going to do with it. If they can get something as controversial as the gay rights issue passed, they can steer David Peterson and get something going for the Cadbury workers."

I would like to make sure that all the members of the Legislature appreciate what I said about the

closure of the Cadbury plant. Nowhere did I say that I was not concerned about the workers, because I am concerned about the workers, as so well reported in the article in the Oshawa-Whitby This Week newspaper by staff reporter Lucy Rybka.

I appreciate the fact that the member for Oshawa brought forward this article so that we can let the record show that I spoke up for the workers. I want to know what the NDP is going to do about those workers.

HELP CENTRES

Mr. Warner: A while back, the Minister of Skills Development (Mr. Sorbara) created an air of uncertainty about the future of the unemployed help centres around Ontario. Unfortunately, to date, the minister has not seen fit to put that uncertainty to rest.

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The unemployed help centres, which are working very diligently on behalf of unemployed people in Ontario, continue to do their work with a cloud hanging over their heads. They do not know whether this government will continue to support them. I wish, once and for all, the minister would stand up, declare that the government is in support of the work being done by the unemployed help centres and stop threatening their existence. Help is needed for the unemployed help centres.

VOTING BY PRIVATE MEMBERS

Mr. Philip: On Thursday, Bill 21 will be debated in the Legislature. I had always been under the impression that private members' public business was for private members. My understanding, however, is that the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr. Riddell) is putting considerable pressure on members of his party to vote, not according to their conscience, but according to his will.

His officials have told people who have called that even if the bill is passed democratically by this House, it will not be called for third reading. Where is open government in Ontario if that kind of coercion by a minority of the Legislature can be imposed on individual members in this House?

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTRY

ONTARIO SCIENCE CENTRE

Hon. Ms. Munro: As everyone in this House knows, the Ontario government has identified the Pacific Rim as a major target for trade development. Agencies of my ministry have

been busy pursuing these opportunities, and the Ontario Science Centre has been especially enterprising in developing foreign markets.

Today I am very pleased to inform the House that the government of Malaysia has agreed to purchase the Science Circus, an exhibition that was mounted by the Ontario Science Centre for the first Association of South-East Asian Nations science and technology week held in Kuala Lumpur last April.

The Prime Minister of Malaysia, who visited the science centre when he was in Ontario, saw the exhibition and was very impressed, and negotiations for the purchase were begun. The agreement includes the services of the Ontario Science Centre staff, who will travel to Kuala Lumpur to convert the exhibition to Malaysia's electrical standards. They will also train Malaysian staff to manage, maintain, program and host the circus.

The Malaysian government financed the purchase of the Science Circus through a \$9.5-million general line of credit from the federal government's Canadian International Development Agency.

I am very proud of the science centre and the way it is reaching out and sharing its knowledge and exciting science presentation skills with other countries, including in recent years Japan, Kuwait, China, the United States and England. Currently, negotiations are taking place in the Middle East and other Pacific Rim nations for exhibit purchases and consulting services.

The government has long recognized the important role of the science centre. Last April we announced that the centre would receive special funding of more than \$8 million in operating and capital moneys over two years, allowing it to revitalize and to address the growing demand for its products and expertise.

I think all members of the House will agree that the Ontario Science Centre is doing a splendid job not only of promoting an understanding of science, but also of raising the profile of Ontario and its rich technological resources.

RESPONSE

ONTARIO SCIENCE CENTRE

Mrs. Marland: I have to express appreciation that there has been recognition today of a marvellous establishment that was created in the province by a Progressive Conservative government. I too am very proud of the Ontario Science Centre and its achievements over the past number of years.

I note in the statement that members of the science centre staff are going to travel to Kuala Lumpur for the establishment of this exhibition. I hope the replacement of those staff members on an interim basis will be well addressed in the contract price so that the ongoing operation of the Ontario Science Centre will not be impeded or jeopardized in any way.

The statement does not address the actual cost of the agreement. It addresses the source of funding that the Malaysian government has used to finance the purchase of the Science Circus. It should be noted that the money has come from the federal Progressive Conservative government.

ATTENDANCE OF MINISTERS

Mr. Andrewes: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. McClellan: Stop the clock.

Mr. Andrewes: Yes, we can stop the clock.

I notice that many members of the executive council are absent this afternoon. It seems that absent are the Premier, president of the council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of Northern Development and Mines (Mr. Peterson); the Attorney General, minister responsible for women's issues and minister responsible for native affairs (Mr. Scott); the Minister of Colleges and Universities and Minister of Skills Development (Mr. Sorbara); the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations and Minister of Financial Institutions (Mr. Kwinter); the Minister of Education and acting Minister of Government Services (Mr. Conway); the Minister of the Environment and chairman of cabinet (Mr. Bradley); the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr. O'Neil); and the Minister of Municipal Affairs and minister responsible for francophone affairs (Mr. Grand-maitre).

There are a number of pressing issues we would like to question the government on during question period. I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that perhaps it might be in order to move a motion to recess the House until the government can gather its thoughts and its cabinet ministers.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: It is not clear whether the honourable member has made such a motion; I sincerely hope he did not. There is not much point in getting into a numbers game, but while the member was gathering his wits and asking me to gather my members, I made a count over there and 40 per cent of the caucus of the official opposition is absent.

I do not think it is really an excuse, but the members will know that the courthouse in Ottawa, a \$50-million program begun by the predecessor government, a marvellous building, now is open for whatever it is they do there. It has been my experience that openings of courthouses have a fatal attraction for politicians. A number of my colleagues, including the Premier, the minister of justice, the minister for women's issues, the minister responsible for native issues and so on, because of their responsibilities, are attending that opening in Ottawa.

I believe it is generally accepted as well that the order of business this afternoon is three important bills dealing with the Ministry of Transportation and Communications. While that is of extensive and far-reaching importance in the province, it does not involve all the members on an immediate basis. While I cannot for a moment say that the members of the executive council here gathered are in a position to answer all the questions, we will do the best we can.

We have ordered for the business of the House this afternoon very important legislation. I suggest it would not be in the best interests of the democratic process and the work of this House to suggest that there should be an adjournment because of the absence of eight of my colleagues. I wish they were here, but they have business elsewhere in the province that they are attending to.

Mr. Andrewes: Mr. Speaker, I—

Mr. Speaker: I believe you rose on a point of order. I cannot allow a debate.

Mr. Andrewes: I only want to draw to your attention, sir, and to the attention of the government House leader, that the motion is for a recess, not an adjournment.

Mr. Speaker: I listened very carefully to the member for Lincoln. As I understood it, he suggested that it be considered. Now the last time he rose, he intimated that it was a motion. I did not understand that by his original comment. I would like to refer to standing order 38(a): "Subject to clause (c) of standing order 32, a motion to adjourn the House or the debate may not be moved until after the orders of the day or notices of motion have been entered upon except by unanimous consent of the House. Such motions do not require notice." I feel there is not unanimous consent.

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Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I understood when the honourable member first stood that he was making a suggestion.

Mr. Andrewes: Mr. Speaker, if you will retrace my words in Hansard, I think you will find that I moved a motion to recess the House while the government gathered its members of cabinet.

Mr. Speaker: I gather from your most recent comment that you wish me to review that to see whether it has been put.

Mr. Andrewes: You can accept my word or you can review.

Mr. Speaker: Are you trying to put a motion?

Mr. Andrewes: I did put a motion.

Mr. Speaker: I believe this matter has come before the House on two previous occasions. I remember very well a similar occasion, I believe it was in July 1985, and at that time I felt it was not in accordance with the standing orders to place a motion to recess the House because of the reasons given.

Mr. Andrewes: Mr. Speaker, we have no alternative but to challenge your decision.

Mr. Speaker: I will then place the question. Shall the Speaker's ruling be upheld?

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion the ayes have it.

Ruling sustained.

ORAL QUESTIONS

PAPER MILL

Mr. Grossman: In the absence of the Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of Northern Development and Mines (Mr. Peterson), the Attorney General and minister responsible for native affairs (Mr. Scott), the Minister of Colleges and Universities and Minister of Skills Development (Mr. Sorbara), the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations and Minister of Financial Institutions (Mr. Kwinter), the Minister of Education and acting Minister of Government Services (Mr. Conway), the Minister of the Environment and acting chairman of cabinet (Mr. Bradley), the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr. O'Neil), the Minister of Municipal Affairs and minister responsible for francophone affairs (Mr. Grandmaitre)—

Mr. Speaker: The question is to which minister?

Mr. Grossman: I have a question for one of the few remaining ministers, and that is the Treasurer.

Yesterday, when questioned by my colleague the member for Durham-York (Mr. Stevenson) with regard to the Kimberly-Clark situation, the formerly combative Minister of the Environment, so formerly dedicated to cleaning up the environment and being tough, indicated he might or might not give some money to Kimberly-Clark to save the 1,600 jobs in Terrace Bay, but he had to wait until he was "assured that there is a genuine case of need."

Given that the minister has had three months to determine that situation, and given that the financial audit of the company clearly shows there is a genuine case of need, will the Treasurer tell me why the money has not yet been given to Kimberly-Clark and the jobs saved?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Perhaps for the same reason it has not been given over the past five years, when the control order has been in effect and Kimberly-Clark has done nothing discernible to improve the situation.

I think everybody in this House agrees that we want the employment opportunities to be maintained and, we hope, expanded in Terrace Bay. I believe everybody in this House agrees that Ontario should establish reasonable levels of pollution abatement and see that they are understood and that they are going to be required.

This narrows it down to the matter the honourable Leader of the Opposition has referred to. When there is evidence by an independent audit that the company concerned cannot finance the kinds of improvements that our regulations require, the alternative is for the public Treasury to involve itself in some reasonable way. It is obvious that alternative is under active consideration.

Mr. Grossman: I wish to correct the record. The Treasurer and his colleagues like to pretend that these circumstances are long-standing and that everything their government fails to do is the result of the previous administration.

The facts will show that the control order was put on in 1982 by the previous government. They were given until October 31, 1986, during which time the previous government did offer financial assistance to Kimberly-Clark. So when the Treasurer stands up with a response to the supplementary question that I am about to put, it would be greatly appreciated if he would correct the record and confirm that the previous government did offer assistance.

It has been five years since the control order went on, and the previous government did offer financial assistance to the company. There are 1,600 jobs at stake in the small community of

Terrace Bay. The audit has now been done, and the company is saying it cannot afford to do it without government funding. Would the Treasurer be kind enough to agree to dedicate a mere two weeks of the \$400-million surplus he has collected in the past six months to devote to this tiny, threatened community in northern Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The honourable member is aware that the pollution abatement capital cost for that mill is something in excess of \$20 million. I believe he is also aware that many other industries would expect, and very properly, to be involved in a broad program of this nature. I can only reiterate what I have already said. The matter is under active consideration. The member is aware that we do not earmark specific allocations of resources, even windfall resources, but I cannot make it much clearer than saying that the matter is under review and that cabinet makes these decisions in conjunction with our colleagues working together in this connection.

The abatement order has been effect since 1982, as the member has said. I think of it in terms of five years during which time nothing was done by the company to effect the move towards reaching the levels that are required under the regulations. It is regrettable this has occurred over this time, but the pollution did not begin with the accession of the Liberal government.

We have been concerned about our policies in this regard because I feel they have not met the needs described in the parameters that are a part of this question. I hope there will be an announcement in the near future about this matter which will be supported on all sides.

Mr. Grossman: Let me point out to the Treasurer that the Minister of the Environment is absent again today for the third time in a week, after having been here almost all the time up until now.

Hon. Mr. Elston: What is wrong with you? He was here yesterday and you were not around at all.

Mr. Grossman: The minister is clearly absent for one simple reason. He is now caught between his previous tough statements and the reality that time has run out on him. He must enforce a control order or put up the government's \$400 million in surplus funds where his tough words are. He now must make the tough choice between enforcing a control order or finding \$20 million out of the government's \$400-million surplus to save 1,600 jobs in Kimberly-Clark.

When he runs up against his previous strong words, his threats and promises to be tough, and

\$20 million from the Treasurer, the Minister of the Environment has no choice but to run and hide from this Legislature. Perhaps he too is at the courthouse in Ottawa when he ought to be here saving the jobs at Kimberly-Clark.

Hon. Mr. Elston: That is not true. You are doing the same thing that you are best at. You are not being correct. You were hiding yesterday.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Elston: Nobody has been in this House more than the Minister of the Environment, and that man is wrong.

Mr. Pope: Do you want to be the Attorney General? Do you want to be the Premier? Do you want to be anybody else who is missing?

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Riddell: Lower than a snake's belly in a wagon rut; that is what you guys are. You are creeping in the ruts.

Mr. Turner: How would you know?

Mr. Gillies: You would have to look skywards to inspect a snake's belly button.

Mr. Speaker: Once again, order.

I will recess this House for 10 minutes.

The House recessed at 2 p.m.

1410

Mr. Speaker: Final supplementary, the leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Grossman: To correct the record, I might say to the House that my information is not that Kimberly-Clark has done nothing in the past five years. It has now complied with six of the seven items on the control order and it has spent more than \$7 million in the past five years on these problems, so the Treasurer's information was perhaps inaccurate. Kimberly-Clark has done a great deal.

We do have 1,600 jobs at risk. I know the Treasurer will acknowledge that and I know he is aware that the range we are talking about is some \$20 million needed by Kimberly-Clark. Given that the Premier has now set up a committee to review this and that he wants some significant proof of actual need, how can the Treasurer justify this process and the holding back of \$20 million to Kimberly-Clark when he gave almost that same amount, i.e., \$17.5 million, to the Premier's friend, Mr. Schwartz, to build Exploracom in Toronto without a financial audit—

Mr. Speaker: The Treasurer.

Mr. Grossman: —without a cabinet committee, without going through these long procedures and without any jobs?

Mr. Speaker: Order. The question has been asked.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The preamble to the member's question that resulted in the brief adjournment was associated with my colleague the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston) trying to bring to your attention, Mr. Speaker, that although the Minister of the Environment was here yesterday, the honourable Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Grossman) was not. That is why this kind of an exchange is not particularly productive. I am sure both gentlemen had important duties to attend to elsewhere.

In answer to the question, I say again to the Leader of the Opposition that all the facts he put forward are correct, and I am glad he did correct the record, particularly as it pertained to my comments, that six of the seven compliance orders had been lived up to.

The company has done some things, that is for sure, and we feel we want to be in a position to require that it does the cleanup in a way that is going to be advantageous for the community and leave the company in a position where it can continue operation, we hope on a profitable basis, in the future, and where the goals of the government and the people of Ontario will be served and the environment will be substantially improved.

Mr. Speaker: New question.

Mr. Grossman: The bottom line is that the Minister of the Environment is usually here—

Mr. Speaker: New question.

Mr. Grossman: —except when the heat hits. He has disappeared for three days.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Grossman: There was \$17 million for Abe Schwartz and not—

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I remind all honourable members this is question period. Does the Leader of the Opposition have a second question? To which minister?

AUTO PACT

Mr. Grossman: In the absence of the Premier and Minister of Northern Development and Mines and in the absence of the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology, who surely should be here to speak to this issue, I have a question for the Minister of Labour.

I am sure the minister has by now had an opportunity to consider the remarks made by Mr.

Peapples of General Motors indicating there may be 40,000 Canadian jobs lost in the auto industry by the early 1990s. Can the Minister of Labour tell us what he and his colleagues are doing right now to avert that tragedy?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: The government has been the leading spokesman in trying to protect the auto pact and in trying to enhance jobs in Ontario. We are very pleased that the levels of automotive employment in the past couple of years have been at record highs. The objective of the government is to maintain as much of that employment as possible within the Big Three, to enhance employment and to be able to attract offshore auto companies to Ontario.

On an ongoing basis, the Premier (Mr. Peterson), the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon), the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr. O'Neil) and indeed all members of cabinet, particularly those with economic portfolios, take a very careful look at the auto industry, which is so important to Ontario.

Mr. Grossman: For the sake of the credibility of the governing party, let us not suggest that the minister and his colleagues are the leading spokespersons defending the auto pact. The minister is no more committed to the auto pact than is anyone else in this Legislature. Indeed, the record will show that his colleagues in the Windsor area led the pack in calling for renegotiations when times were tough in that area.

Mr. Speaker: The supplementary question is?

Mr. Grossman: The minister has talked of attracting new investments in the auto industry. I remind the minister that Mr. Peapples, who is on the Premier's high-tech fund, has pointed out that some of the new investment that came here with \$95 million from this government failed to comply totally with the auto pact provisions. As a result, we may well get from these companies outsourcing of auto parts—sourcing outside this country—which would have to be sourced inside this country if the company were one of the Big Three complying with the auto pact.

Given that circumstance, can the minister outline specifically what he or his colleagues the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology, the Premier and the Treasurer have done to ensure that, with this new capacity coming into Ontario, they have not lost jobs in the longer term in the parts sector and in the broader automotive sector?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I am beginning to understand that article this morning. This government remains very committed not only to the automo-

tive companies, but also to the auto parts sector, which has been a very difficult sector. We are anxious to protect and enhance as many jobs as we can.

Over the years, this party and this government have indicated and demonstrated in many ways their commitment to a strong and viable automotive industry in Canada. It was not until it became clear that this government was going to speak strongly for all the people of Ontario, particularly those in the automotive cities of Ontario, that the federal government's tough line began to emerge last week through its free trade negotiator, Mr. Reisman. This government has already had a very positive impact on the situation.

Mr. Grossman: The Treasurer can see how badly he needs to get some ministers into the House who know what they are talking about on the auto pact.

The Minister of Labour has been put on notice by the president of General Motors of Canada that 40,000 Canadian jobs are at risk. Can he tell us specifically, not the good intentions, but whether his ministry has started a training or retraining program for some of the workers? Has the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology put up an adjustment assistance program for the industry? Has any assistance program been put in place to help the adjustment in the broader auto pact sector? Has he ensured that there are any provisions built into the \$95 million that was given to the Japanese company to locate in Ontario that will provide the necessary protection?

1420

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I regret that my colleague the Minister of Colleges and Universities and Minister of Skills Development (Mr. Sorbara), who has the primary responsibility in this cabinet for training, is in the city of Windsor today making important announcements for my community. He is meeting with the president of the University of Windsor and the president of St. Clair College trying to undo the damage that government did to the post-secondary community over so many years.

I am sure the Leader of the Opposition can ask the Minister of Skills Development, on his return tomorrow, about the training. As well, when my colleague the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology returns, he can ask him that. The Leader of the Opposition knows the proper minister to put these questions to and I suggest he do so.

PAPER MILL

Mr. Rae: I have a question for the Treasurer. We need to find out why it has taken the government three months after the expiry of the last control order to get the government to make up its mind. We know there has been a running battle between the minister and his deputy. We know that running battle has meant the Premier (Mr. Peterson) has had to take the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) out of the game. We know there now is a committee of bureaucrats dealing with this issue. We know that is why the minister has been ducking question period and has not been here.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I recessed the House a while ago because we were interrupting ourselves. I hope that does not occur again.

Mr. Rae: I would like to ask the Treasurer a very basic question that we are entitled to have an answer to. Can he give us the assurance that the control order that is going to take place will have a definite expiry date attached to it with conditions relating to performance in terms of the reduction of pollution? Can he give us the assurance that the government of Ontario is going to be directly involved to protect the jobs of the workers who have contributed so much to the economy of this province?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I think the preamble by the leader of the third party was unworthy of him. While the Minister of the Environment was in the House answering questions yesterday, the leader of the third party was out in the community doing goodness knows what, probably listening to soap operas or something such as that. There is a worthy comment.

Mr. Speaker: And now for the response.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: In response to his preamble, his intelligence is totally erroneous. He should be aware that discussions of this nature in the cabinet under the Premier's leadership are full of understanding, that the facts are put forward in an unbiased way and that we move with all the deliberation the taxpayers would desire in important matters of this type. We are moving towards a solution in this matter. I can assure him that when it comes forward, whatever it may be, we expect the enthusiastic support of all the members of the House.

Mr. Rae: Why watch a soap opera when you can come here every day and watch the real thing in action, watching the Treasurer trying to answer these basic questions and giving us a song and dance? It is a soap opera of a government

where the deputy minister and the Premier are doing an end run around the minister, where the minister has zero credibility with respect to the environment because of what has taken place.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: If that was a question, I would like to respond.

Mr. Speaker: I guess it was. I was going to ask if the supplementary was on the soap opera. Do you have a supplementary?

Mr. Rae: I have a question about the saga, "As Bob Turns."

I would like to ask the Treasurer to answer the question I asked him before. Is there going to be a definite time attached to a new control order? Is the government going to be directly involved to protect the jobs of those workers who contributed so much to the economy of northern Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The member is aware that we must protect the jobs in every way we possibly can. We also want to establish credible bases for the environment that will be enforced. In this connection, there is nobody in this House or this province who does not have the highest respect for the Minister of the Environment. His credibility is excellent. Not one of his predecessors in the history of that ministry has done more for the environment. I am proud to be associated with him.

We want to protect the jobs and we want to clean up the environment. If it requires the utilization of public funds in some way, in some program new or old, we are giving that the careful consideration such a difficult question merits.

Mr. Pouliot: This is no laughing matter. We are simply asking that the Treasurer give consideration to putting human needs ahead of bureaucratic convenience. Does he realize the climate of anxiety of the people of Terrace Bay and the five communities that are depending on its survival? He should realize the impact and the dilemma in which his government has placed the workers of northern Ontario because of its inability to govern and to make up its mind in this affair.

Will the Treasurer make a commitment? Will he please give us a date and the contents of the control order so we can go on with the basic necessities of putting bread on the table? It is no laughing matter. The Treasurer has the responsibility to give us a date and the contents of the control order so that we can go on with our lives.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I acknowledge the concern expressed by the honourable member. He also represents the concerns of his constituents in

Terrace Bay in an effective way. We do not think it is a laughing matter. Sometimes the member's leader moves me to amusement, and I regret that. It happens.

It is not possible for me to answer the member's question in terms of any control order, the involvement of public funds and in what degree, or even a date. I simply say again that it is under active consideration. The pressure is on the minister and all of us in the government to come up with an effective solution. I can assure all members we will, and we look forward to their support on that occasion.

Mr. Rae: It is three months after the expiry of the last order and the Minister of the Environment has been taken off the case. Those are two things we now know.

DAY CARE

Mr. Rae: I have a question of the Minister of Community and Social Services. The minister will be aware of a press conference held this morning to discuss a report conducted for the parliamentary committee in Ottawa dealing with the relative quality of day care being provided across Canada. He will be aware of some quite devastating results of a survey conducted by that committee with respect to the quality of care provided in many day care centres in the country, and presumably in Ontario, and the fact that many day care centres run for profit offer a standard of care that is not acceptable.

Will the minister comment on the report and make public all government inspection reports with respect to day care centres in the province? And given this report, can he explain why his government is still so determined to see that for-profit centres get a handle on government money?

1430

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I met with members of the combined coalition group who were present at the press conference earlier this morning, and they shared that report with me. My understanding is that the report reflects the situation across Canada; it is not a direct reflection of the situation in Ontario. This is not to suggest that it perhaps is not at least partially true in Ontario.

However, I remind the honourable leader that nonprofit centres and commercial centres are inspected in the same way by the same people and acquire the same kinds of licences under the same sets of conditions. If there is a difficulty in the quality of a commercial centre or a nonprofit centre, the same action is taken. Therefore, there is no good reason to believe that, as a general

rule, commercial centres do not have good quality and nonprofit centres automatically do have good quality. There are good ones and problem ones in both.

Mr. Rae: The minister is making a statement that is completely and utterly at variance with the report that was released this morning. He may choose to make that kind of statement and he may choose to believe it; but if he makes that kind of statement, he ought to understand that when he does so he is saying something that is contradicted directly by the report. The report states very clearly, for example:

"Global ratings of all centres: Very poor: nonprofit, two per cent; small profit, six per cent; government, zero per cent. Poor: nonprofit, nine per cent; small profit, 19 per cent; chain, 15 per cent." Even of chain centres, 15 per cent are categorized, not by the authors of the report but by inspectors, presumably inspectors even in his own ministry.

I repeat my question to the minister: given that documentation with respect to poor homes clearly establishes that there are more poor day care centres operated on a for-profit basis than is the case for nonprofit centres, municipal or government centres, why are the reports not made public in Ontario as a matter of course, first of all? Second, why is he so determined to continue down the path of giving the chain centres and the for-profit centres a stake in the system and giving them even greater control over the system than they now have?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: If I am wrong the honourable member can correct me, but by implication the suggestion is being made that commercial centres are chain centres. That is not the fact in Ontario. Of the commercial centres in Ontario, 80 per cent are operated by single operators. We do not have a lot of chains here. In fact, if we define a chain as an operator who has five or more centres, that represents five per cent of the centres in Ontario. Thus, we do not have that particular problem.

Second, with respect to the inspection reports, as I indicated a couple of minutes ago, the same inspections by the same people, the same licensing procedure, are done for both commercial and noncommercial centres. If in either case there are situations that have to be corrected, that centre is given a conditional licence, which is posted. As part of that conditional licence the changes that have to be made are listed, and they are posted as well. They then have 30 days to make the necessary corrections. Whether it is

commercial or noncommercial, the same rule applies.

Mr. Rae: I want to make clear that the minister has again misunderstood. If he looks at the survey, it establishes a number of basic criteria: enhancing child development, service to working parents, potential for providing broad family and community support, health and safety. Those are the tests that are applied. They do a survey across the board. There are more day care centres in Ontario than in other provinces. The minister will know that. On the basis of that, 25 per cent of the small profit day care centres are described as very poor or poor in quality, one quarter. Fifteen per cent of the chains are described as being very poor or poor, one out of every six. The minister is responsible for those children who are in very poor or poor centres on a daily basis.

Given his responsibility, how can the minister continue to keep the inspection reports private and not available to the public on a basic as-of-right basis? Why is he persisting in his strategy, not of toughening up the regulations but of loosening the regulations and saying, "Here is some money, guys; come and get it"? The strategy does not make any sense. It flies in the face of common sense.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I have just explained to the member that when an inspection report indicates that changes have to be made, that is posted.

The second point—and I made this to the member on the basis of a previous question—is that if a parent who wishes to use that centre wants to be apprised of that inspection report, he or she can go to the centre and get that information. It is not secret in the sense that the member defines it.

We talked earlier here, and since that discussion I have spoken to my officials about the possibility of a form of posting. We are investigating that now. It may well happen.

With respect to providing financial assistance to the centres, I have said on numerous occasions that we were talking about protecting the existing spaces. We are not talking about expanding that sector of child care service. We are talking about the high percentage of spaces there now. We simply cannot replace those spaces over a short time; therefore, we have to be sure they continue to be there. We are not talking—and the member again repeats the term "chains"—about chains dominating the market in Ontario. They do not; they have only five per cent of it.

TECHNOLOGY FUND

Mr. Gillies: In the absence of the Premier (Mr. Peterson), the head of the technology fund, my question will be to the Treasurer. While Kimberly-Clark languishes for the lack of \$20 million, the technology fund's only major commitment thus far is, as my leader stated earlier, to the Exploracom project headed by the Premier's friend Mr. Schwartz.

In view of continuing media speculation about the lack of success of private fund-raising for this project, can the Treasurer inform the House of the status of the Premier's proposed investment in this project and of the private sector fund-raising endeavours undertaken by Mr. Schwartz in aid of this project?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The public financing for Exploracom will certainly depend upon the ability of Exploracom to raise the funds necessary to match and also guarantee the continuing funding of the program in the future, but that matter is under review.

Mr. Gillies: We contacted a number of companies in the computer field, including the four majors, Xerox, IBM, Northern Telecom and Bell, all of which indicated they were not participating in the project.

I wonder whether the Treasurer can confirm that Mr. Schwartz has been informed the province will be withdrawing its \$17.5 million. With an election looming, the government has realized this was a massive blunder.

I wonder also whether the Treasurer can inform the House whether Mr. Schwartz has himself guaranteed a \$3-million loan for this project and whether it is Mr. Schwartz's intention to take legal action against the government for withdrawing the commitment?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: It is a fact that the funding of Exploracom is not satisfactory from the government's point of view. We feel that Exploracom cannot make up the commitments made originally and it is not expected that the province will advance any money to Exploracom under those circumstances.

1440

PLANT SHUTDOWN

Mr. Breagh: I have a question for the Minister of Labour concerning the Neilson raid on Cadbury Schweppes. Will he table for us in this House the information he has gathered from his meetings—I understand he has met with Neilson and is scheduling meetings with Cadbury—all the details of that takeover propos-

al? Will he also provide us with the company's justification for closing the Whitby plant?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I do not have those details yet. One of the aspects of this takeover that the honourable member asked me about last week in this House was whether this government would be getting involved with the federal authorities that have an opportunity to look at this. I am given to understand my office has been in contact with the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and that a preliminary examination of this buyout is under way. We are keeping in close contact on that.

Last Friday, I met for about an hour and a half with senior officials of the Neilson company and they explained the basis for their decisions. While I am away from the House for minor surgery, I expect my office will have meetings with Cadbury and with Local 222 of the Canadian Auto Workers. At that point, we will be advising cabinet as to what next action, if any, the government ought to take.

Mr. Breagh: Can the minister explain to us why he has not yet registered his objections with the Competition Tribunal? For all intents and purposes, he is approving the takeover and closure of the Whitby plant. Why can he not at least call for the inquiry by registering the objections of Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: As I indicated to the honourable gentleman in answer to his first question, we have not yet completed meetings. The tribunal is already conducting a preliminary examination into this matter. The second stage of such would be a formal inquiry. By that point, we will have a position as to whether this government ought to ask that a full inquiry look into the appropriateness of this matter.

It is a very unusual situation that a company buys another and immediately announces its closure. I understand from press reports and from hearing the gentleman and his colleague that there is a great deal of unhappiness in the area, as one might expect. We are looking carefully at whether the situation that is developing is one that is in any way avoidable and whether the company ought to be allowed to complete the purchase.

POLICE INVESTIGATIONS

Mr. Brandt: My question is for the Solicitor General in the light of the fact that the government over the course of the past year has initiated a number of investigations by the Ontario Provincial Police. For the minister's information, these include allegations of miscon-

duct and drug and alcohol abuse at the Workers' Compensation Board rehab centre in Downsview, the potential misuse of government funds by Wyda Systems, the potential misuse of government funds by LSI Applications and potential criminal charges to be laid as a result of the Vaughan land sale.

Will the minister inform the House when the Legislative Assembly members will be advised of the outcome of those investigations? Will he table those reports at the earliest opportunity for the House to peruse?

Hon. Mr. Keyes: I will be happy to give an update as to the dates of potential completion of those investigations. I believe that at the present moment many of them are still going on. As far as the availability goes, some of these are reports that can be made public, others are not.

Mr. Brandt: Can the minister indicate as well the number of OPP officers involved in the investigations and the cost of those investigations, as well as the personal investigations that were undertaken with respect to the minister's own activities?

Hon. Mr. Keyes: I will take that question as notice and refer it to the officials for an appropriate answer. If some of those are still going on, I suggest it will be some time before those exact figures can be obtained for every one of the investigations that have been done.

APARTMENT CONVERSIONS

Mr. Grande: My question is of the Minister of Housing. It is in regard to 400 Walmer Road, the condo conversion in Metropolitan Toronto.

Since tenants believe that Bill 11, the Rental Housing Protection Act, was passed by the Legislature to give them security in their homes for at least two years; since the city of York council has decided not to protect the 547 rental housing units on Walmer Road and will change them into condominiums; and since his ministry and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs disagree with that decision, what is he going to do about it? Is he going to investigate it? Is he going to find out whether the city has a right to that decision in respect to his Bill 11?

Hon. Mr. Curling: The honourable member is rather conclusive about how the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Grandmaitre) agrees about that case on Walmer Road. The member knows the case is now being appealed, and it will be heard. We believe Bill 11 is a very effective bill in protecting the rental stock. If the municipality feels it can release those buildings that it feels can be protected, the process will take

its course. That case is now being appealed, so I cannot understand when the member says the Minister of Municipal Affairs agrees on that process.

Mr. Grande: The Minister of Housing again has either not heard or misunderstood. I suggest to him that both the Minister of Housing and the Minister of Municipal Affairs disagree with the decision that the city council took.

I would like to find out from him first, since the decision is being appealed at the Ontario Municipal Board and since it is in the best interests of his government to protect Bill 11, whether he is going to provide intervenor funding to those people who will be appearing before the OMB so that the best possible case can be put forward to protect rental housing in this province. Second, once the OMB receives the decision, does the minister not realize that the decision is in his court, because it could be appealed to cabinet?

Hon. Mr. Curling: A process is in place, and there are no applications to me or anyone for intervenor funding. I know the OMB will hear the case on its merits and make its decision. If those applicants need intervenor funds, I presume they can make their case. I cannot make a decision on whether they will get intervenor funding.

SEASONAL HOUSING

Mr. McGuigan: I have a question of the Minister of Agriculture and Food. The Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association, meeting today in its annual convention, is concerned that federal funds are available for the seasonal housing program for farm workers but that these funds will be withdrawn by April 1 if they are not matched by provincial moneys.

This past summer the federal-provincial farm employment program was very successful in providing Canadian workers to work on Ontario farms. New Brunswick was particularly successful as the source of these farm workers. Can the minister announce or provide matching funds that will be available prior to April 1 so that this program may be taken up before it runs out on April 1?

Hon. Mr. Riddell: I responded to a question very similar to this one that was posed by a member of the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association at its convention, which started the beginning of this week. I indicated to them that the details of a federal-provincial agreement for seasonal housing were being finalized. I am in the process of going to cabinet

to seek approval. I hope I will be able to get cabinet approval within the next week or two. After that, the final details for a federal-provincial agreement will have been worked out, and we should be in business.

1450

Mr. Stevenson: I have a question for the same minister on the same issue. Once again, we are back into accusations of verbal promises. The people from the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association felt the minister had promised them funding for the 1986 season, this past season. Did the minister make any promises to them during the 1986 season?

Hon. Mr. Riddell: No, I cannot recall making any promises. I knew full well that once the program had terminated some time in 1986—I forget when it was—I would be getting together with my federal counterpart to see whether a new program could be established. I do not know why in the world I would ever say to the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association that there would be a program in place when I did not know whether my federal counterpart was going to agree to a federal-provincial program.

Mr. Stevenson: I am sure the fruit and vegetable growers will read that answer with interest. In April 1986, the federal government allocated \$400,000 for the 1986 seasonal program. That was subsequently reduced to \$200,000 because of the minister's inactivity or his prompting. That offer is about to terminate. Why has the minister misled the fruit and vegetable growers during 1986 and when will he have money available for 1986?

Mr. Speaker: Order. In all fairness, you should reconsider what you stated. I wonder whether the member will withdraw that and change his wording.

Mr. Stevenson: Perhaps I should say that the information the—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Will you withdraw that statement?

Mr. Stevenson: If there is some problem with "misled," I will withdraw that word and ask the minister why his comments again seem to be completely out of phase with the comments of the growers? When can they expect funding for the construction undertaken in 1986?

Hon. Mr. Riddell: Whatever the member has to say does not affect me too much because he is famous for making those accusations, although he will not step outside the House and make allegations. Natural Fry is an example.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The minister has a response.

Hon. Mr. Riddell: I have listened to several allegations made by the honourable member. Natural Fry is an example. For obvious reasons, the member will not go outside the House and name me, my deputy minister, my assistant deputy minister or anyone out of the Premier's office. He will not name those people for very obvious reasons. I do not worry too much about the member's accusations.

I will tell him that a lot of the programs by the previous administration came under the BILD program, which was terminated by this government.

Mr. Stevenson: You terminated it. Now what are you going to do about it?

Hon. Mr. Riddell: We are coming in with far better programs.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The member for Nickel Belt would like your attention so that he can ask a question.

PROVINCIAL PARKS

Mr. Laughren: I have a question for the Minister of Natural Resources. The minister will know that his predecessor, who is the member for Cochrane South (Mr. Pope), promised, to his credit, the creation of 155 new provincial parks. At this point, 51 of those parks have still not been officially designated despite the fact that the Premier (Mr. Peterson) promised that by the end 1985 all of them would be officially designated. Can the minister tell us why, aside from divisions within in his own cabinet, those parks have not been designated?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: That is an important question, and I would certainly like to share with all members the reasons those parks have not been brought into regulation. When I first took over in the ministry, there seemed to be an agreement on multiple use of parks. It appeared that many of the parties had agreed, after sitting around the table, that this possibility could be achieved.

I am sorry to say that when the new government took over, some parties withdrew from what had appeared to be a reasonable multiple use of parks. The fact that this happened has caused us to hold back on the regulation, to try to get a commitment again from the various users of all parks across the province. I guess it is important to those people who have generally had historical uses of park areas to be given some

feeling that we in this government will look at the multiple use of parks. That could be a reality if we were to bring the parties back together and have some unanimity in the use of parks.

Mr. Bernier: You caused the problem and nobody else.

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: The member should not point his finger at me. He is as big a cause of the problem as anyone else.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Once again, I remind members that interjections are out of order.

Mr. Laughren: All the minister is telling us is that he has not been able to make a decision. Whether or not people have different views, why does he not officially designate the parks, so boundaries are set, and then have public hearings on what goes on within those parks? If he does not want to do that, why does he not assign it to the Provincial Parks Council, so it can come up with a policy, since the minister does not seem to have the courage to do so?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: It is not a matter of courage at all. It is putting the parks to the best possible use for the people of Ontario. This government has done something that has not been done for a good long time in Ontario; that is, to agree with the federal government to have a new national park in the Bruce Peninsula. I take a great deal of pride in that. We took the initiative and are going to do that. That is to the benefit of all the people in this great province of ours, to enjoy a wonderful new park.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I will just wait.

AGRICULTURAL FUNDING

Mr. Stevenson: I have a question for the Minister of Agriculture and Food. I regret I have to keep asking these questions, but there is a great difference between what the minister is telling us and what the farmers are telling us.

On the Natural Fry issue, does the minister deny that phone calls were made to bankers at his request by people under his responsibility?

Hon. Mr. Riddell: I certainly do. I never requested any staff member of mine in the Ministry of Agriculture and Food to make any phone calls to bankers.

Mr. Stevenson: I find that absolutely incredible, because we clearly have it in writing from several people who were at a meeting with the minister that those statements were made.

Prior to Christmas, the minister asked that we get evidence in writing. Now he has changed his story; it now is only letters signed by the minister that we must have in writing. It would be very good if he would get his story straight on exactly what has happened and get it even slightly in tune with what the farmers are saying. He should admit he led the growers astray into far greater financial problems than they were already in and he should come across and pay them in full for their trouble.

1500

Hon. Mr. Riddell: The only member who is mixed up is the member for Durham-York and he has been that way ever since he got to that side of the House. He should face the facts and carry out his opposition duties in a responsible and dignified manner. I also have the minutes of every meeting I held with the potato growers, the potato board, the processors and anyone connected with the potato industry. I have the minutes of the meetings and I know exactly what I said. It is the member who does not know anything about it.

DOMESTIC WORKERS

Ms. Gigantes: My question is for the Minister of Labour. A year ago I asked him to bring in legislation to provide employment standards for domestic workers in this province that would govern hours of work and overtime and permit unionization. He assured me we were going to have a change in regulation under his munificence and that I would not have long to wait. What has happened to that promise?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: The matter is under active consideration.

Ms. Gigantes: Can the minister elaborate on why, when what was proposed was a simple change to regulation, it has taken more than a year to produce an answer that tells us we have to wait some more?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: The matter was subjected to a round of very comprehensive consultations with a number of organizations. Proposals have gone forward for discussion with my cabinet colleagues. When those discussions are complete, the members of the Legislature and the public will be aware of the decision of the government in this regard.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

Mr. Brandt from the standing committee on administration of justice reported the following resolution:

That supply in the following amounts and to defray the expenses of the Ministry of the Solicitor General be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1987:

Ministry administration program,
\$8,169,100; public safety program,
\$23,286,900; policing services program,
\$8,257,500; and Ontario Provincial Police program,
\$240,996,400.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. R. F. Johnston from the standing committee on social development reported the following resolution:

That supply in the following amount and to defray the expenses of the Office Responsible for Women's Issues be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1987:

Office Responsible for Women's Issues program, \$8,342,000.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr. McClellan: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order: On Tuesday, December 16, there was an altercation between the the member for Sudbury East (Mr. Martel) and the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye). You undertook to review the transcript and to report back to the House on whether the Minister of Labour had violated standing orders. That seems to have got lost over the Christmas season. I draw it to your attention on page 4267 of Hansard and ask whether you could reactivate that concern.

Mr. Speaker: I certainly will. I thank the member for drawing that to my attention.

MOTION

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTION

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved that the following substitution be made on the select committee on health: Ms. Hart for Mr. Poirier.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TRUCK TRANSPORTATION ACT

Hon. Mr. Fulton moved second reading of Bill 150, An Act to regulate Truck Transportation.

Hon. Mr. Fulton: Bill 150 is an act to regulate truck transportation, one of three bills related to trucking I will be presenting for second reading.

When I introduced first reading, I may have been remiss in not commenting on and congratulating the members of the select committee on highway transportation of goods of some years ago. My critic the member for Mississauga East

(Mr. Gregory) was chairman of the committee and the member for Etobicoke (Mr. Philip) served long and diligently on it as well.

I explained the purpose of these bills in some detail upon their introduction on November 19, 1986. However, I would like to state the basic principles today.

Bill 150 provides a new framework for the regulation of Ontario's trucking industry. Primary among the proposed changes will be the replacement of entry controls from a test of need to licensing on the basis of fitness. The test of public necessity and convenience established some 50 years ago has hindered competition.

This test, which takes the form of an adversarial, legalistic and often very expensive hearing before the Ontario Highway Transport Board, has made it difficult to obtain a licence to operate as a for-hire trucker in Ontario, thus protecting existing truckers from competition. The hearing process is both time-consuming and costly to the industry and to the public. In short, it no longer serves the needs of our shipping and trucking industries nor benefits Ontario's consumers.

The new act requires applicants to show they are fit to be licensed to provide a trucking service. This will entail both an examination of the applicant's past performance record and the requirement that the applicant or an employee of the applicant be a holder of a certificate of competency.

The new fitness test will cover the prospective trucker's knowledge of safe trucking operation, transportation legislation, insurance requirements and vehicle maintenance practices. While reducing government intervention in the economic regulation of trucking, this act will increase the emphasis on safety and performance. Furthermore, additional safety measures will be covered under Bill 152.

Second, this act recognizes the reality of today's transportation environment. In recent years, there have been attempts to provide efficient and innovative transportation services. In many cases, such operations are technically illegal under the present Public Commercial Vehicles Act. Not only has this inhibited the introduction of new services, but also it has created enforcement difficulties.

The new act legalizes these transportation services by providing for the licensing of owner-operators and single-source lease operations. It will also ease the administrative burden of rate filing, allowing for more flexible pricing strategies and the use of confidential contracts.

1510

To address any concerns respecting entry into the trucking business that may cause a disruption to the marketplace, the act provides for a public interest test. This will take the form of a hearing before the Ontario Highway Transport Board whenever it is shown a new applicant poses a threat to the public interest.

Further, the legislation establishes an advisory committee on truck transportation. This committee will report to me on the effectiveness of these reforms, the need to continue the public interest test beyond five years and other matters concerning the transportation of goods. The committee will be drawn from industry, both shippers and truckers, as well as government representatives.

These reforms resulted from extensive consultations with the trucking and shipping industries. I have also met with my counterparts across the country to ensure that these measures are compatible with national reform initiatives. These discussions have taken place over a number of years. They represent a broad consensus and are designed to provide a more competitive, responsive and flexible trucking industry to serve the Ontario marketplace.

Mr. Speaker: Are there any comments or questions?

Mr. Gregory: I take a great deal of pleasure in taking part in this debate with the minister—

Mr. Speaker: Order. I was asking for comments or questions. Are you carrying on with the debate?

Mr. Gregory: I thought his comments were very good.

Mr. Speaker: Before I recognize the member for further debate, I would like to draw the members' attention to a former member for Cornwall, George Samis, who is sitting in the gallery.

Mr. Wildman: I note that the former member for Cornwall is with us this afternoon. He had a tremendous interest in this when he was a member of the Legislature, and has now in his capacity with the board. However, I would ask the minister how extensively he consulted with Eric Cunningham on this initiative. Why is Eric not with us this afternoon?

Hon. Mr. Fulton: I welcome the comments of the member for Mississauga East, and I accept the comment of my friend the member for Algoma (Mr. Wildman). I do not have the vaguest idea where the gentleman is whose name he mentioned. I did not realize Mr. Samis was here, but I welcome him, as a former member

and as a newly appointed member of the Ontario Highway Transport Board. I wish he were sitting on this side, however.

Mr. Gregory: I too welcome Mr. Samis back. It has been some time, and he was a—I will let it go at that. Welcome back, George. It is nice to see you back.

I also welcome the comment of my friend the member for Algoma. I would like to give my impression of where Eric Cunningham is, but I will not; it will save everybody some embarrassment.

I am glad to take part in the debate on this bill in principle. I congratulate the minister on his first piece of legislation of any consequence. It is an important bill. Our party will be supporting the bill in principle.

Mr. Morin-Strom: The member cannot be serious.

Mr. Gregory: I am totally serious.

Mr. Morin-Strom: Why does he not support the Ontario Trucking Association?

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Gregory: I do not hesitate to say that. My friend in the back row, who has never appeared at any of the committee meetings or anything else, is an expert on it. If he has read anything, he should know the Ontario Trucking Association supports the bill too. I accept its advice more than I accept his.

We will be voting for the bill in principle. However, we will be taking the position that, upon obtaining second reading, it should be referred to a standing committee for public hearings and clause-by-clause debate. We feel it is important. Whereas I said at the outset that we support this in principle, there are many problems we have with it, not the principle of the bill but certain clauses that need to be looked into.

I thank the minister for his remarks on the report of the select committee. I assume he has read it word for word, all 1,700 pages. He should. It gives a good blueprint for the trucking industry in Canada. However, one of the things with which I take issue is his statement that the bill parallels the recommendations of the committee. It is not entirely true. There were some concerns expressed in the select committee of which I had the honour of being chairman.

I will take an excerpt from that report. This report was written 10 years ago. It took 10 years to write it before that—no, that is not true either, but it should have taken 10 years. The member for Etobicoke and I worked very hard on that report. The excerpt reads:

“The provision of transport services on a for-hire basis has been a traditional activity of entrepreneurs for centuries. The evolvement of surface carriage on public rights of way has come a long way from the horse-and-buggy days of medieval Europe to today’s capital-intensive transcontinental trucking firm, employing thousands of men responsible for sophisticated transport, capable of hauling 50 tons of goods at high speeds over the modern roads.”

The minister should not worry; I am not going to read the whole 1,700 pages, just this appropriate part. He has time. The excerpt continues:

“In the evolution, several inherent characteristics of the industry have become apparent. The glamour of independence draws many individuals into the industry. Many of these people are not trained in management processes; most of them start out with insufficient marketing data with which they could justify their decision to enter the industry in the first place.

“Low technological requirements of the industry effectively remove lack of skill from being an entry barrier. In addition, the low capital requirements for initial entry act as a heady inducement to would-be entrepreneurs. As a consequence, chronic conditions of oversupply prevail. This has led to a history of instability wherever industry entry has not been controlled. In fairness, it must be stated that the large and medium-size trucking firms which exist within the Ontario economy have a great deal of sophistication in their management.

“Nevertheless, in those jurisdictions where entry control did not exist in the early days of the trucking industry’s growth, conditions of chaos existed for the users of the service, as well as the providers. Shippers would find that carriers with whom they contracted for carriage were improperly insured, or not insured at all, so that lost or damaged goods became a shipper liability; that the vehicles were unreliable, due to poor maintenance; that the drivers were overworked and less than careful with the goods and that the carriers were unreliable even as to their very existence.

“In summary, the here-today-gone-tomorrow character of the industry imposed a real loss upon the economy at large.

“These symptoms were the direct result of an excess of supply of transport services. This led to frantic cost-cutting, beyond the limits of prudence, by all carriers as they struggled to survive.

“In places, social unrest characterized the operators’ expressions of dissatisfaction with the

circumstances. It is small wonder that authorities responded to these situations by instituting a system of entry controls which were designed to protect the shippers by ensuring that a stable and adequately financed source of supply was available to them and to protect the operators against destructive competition by controlling industry growth."

I think the select committee that came up with this report was recommending entirely the opposite of what the minister is saying. It was saying the controls were needed, and were needed very badly. However, all things change. I think the recommendations of the select committee—not all of them, but a lot of them—were, by and large, brought into force, and a lot of good has been done by that.

A lot of control has been gained over the trucking industry, and a lot of safety precautions have been taken. Much of the dangerous equipment has been taken off the road. Many of the abuses, such as overextended hours of driving by truckers, have been eliminated. Perhaps it is time for us to move towards a lessening of the regulations in the trucking industry.

The former Minister of Transportation and Communications, the Honourable James Snow, was of that feeling, and I believe this legislation is based on his working paper. The member for Dufferin-Simcoe (Mr. McCague), another former Minister of Transportation and Communications, also endorsed what we are doing here. On that basis, I have no hesitation in saying to the minister that it is a good idea in principle and I believe I have the support of many people who use the services of trucks and who would agree.

1520

My friend the member for Sault Ste. Marie (Mr. Morin-Strom), who has now gone, asked if I had talked to the Ontario Trucking Association. Yes, I have. I have had much conversation with them and a lot of input from them. They have their problems but they are accepting the bill, on which I congratulate them. They do have many problems I feel they should have the opportunity to present to the members.

One criticism of which I was informed by the OTA is that the minister had agreed to meet with its members once again, prior to this second reading, and he did not. This was expressed to me. No doubt the minister has the same information at present as I have on what their recommendations are going to be and what their thrust is going to be on this bill. Most of the problems they have are with safety, and they

want to ensure that safety is a prime factor in this bill. I expect the minister will be hearing more from them. I will be touching on that a little later.

I want to go over some of the main points of the bill and touch on some that the minister has already touched on. I think the change in the entry qualifications from an examination of the need for additional service to an examination of fitness of the applicant—in other words, the ability to provide a service—is good.

Mr. Wildman: Survival of the fittest.

Mr. Gregory: We have had many horror stories before the Ontario Highway Transport Board—

Mr. Wildman: The law of the jungle.

Mr. Gregory: Slow down, Bud. You will get a chance. Let this Bud speak. This Bud is for me.

Too many times we have heard the horror stories before the OHTB, where a man or woman is applying for a licence, only to be confronted by lawyers who may be representing as many as 20 other trucking companies and who—surprise, surprise—are trying to prevent somebody else from getting a licence. One can understand their point of view; naturally, they do not want the competition.

I dare say when I was in the insurance business I regretted every time they gave a new insurance agent a licence, but I was not given the opportunity to prevent it. For many years, we have given trucking companies the opportunity to prevent somebody else from getting a licence. That is not in the spirit of free enterprise, to my mind. Perhaps because the bill is correcting this, that is why my friends on the left do not support it. Anything to do with free enterprise frightens the bejabsers out of them. I was going to say something else but I will not. I think this is a—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr. Gregory: All things change except the New Democratic Party. The party of last resort over here never changes its philosophy; it goes on and on and on in opposition. They are going nowhere because they will not adopt new thinking. They will not adopt a broadening of their thinking in any way. They have closed minds. Anyway, I am not here to debate the NDP, which is beyond help. We will concentrate on the bill.

The certificate of competency—

Mr. Martel: How about a handout or something like that? You heard Larry today. We have to have more corporate socialism.

Mr. Gregory: Elie, hang on.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr. Gregory: Elie, hold on. You might get appointed to the board they are talking about here.

The Deputy Speaker: If the member for Mississauga East would speak to the chair, it would discourage the interjections.

Mr. Gregory: I would be delighted to speak to you at any time, Mr. Speaker. When I face the alternative, it is probably much preferable I speak to you.

I see the certificate of competency as almost unworkable. It is going to have to have a great deal of work to determine precisely what competency is. I do not know whether the minister can describe for me at this time what competency is in the trucking industry. I would be interested in hearing if he could. Maybe the government whip over there is explaining it to him right now so he will be able to say what a certificate of competency is. I hope he is going to address himself to that and explain fully to me later what is going to be included in the certificate of competency, because it is a little nebulous right now. I hope he will get into that a little more closely, so we will all understand what particular talents the trucker must have to get a licence, apart from the ability to hire a lawyer and prove he can get insurance.

The fitness test, I believe, covers two things. I expect it covers the fitness of a person to drive a transport truck, plus the fitness of the equipment. I hope it addresses both.

Many of the problems we flagged in the select committee report have been mentioned in the minister's remarks. The unfitness of equipment was one of the problems we faced in the early days. Because there was so much competition and transport owners were putting less and less money into the maintenance of their equipment, their trucks were running with bald tires and overworked drivers; and such forbidden things as bennies to keep people awake while they drove nonstop to Florida were discussed and this sort of thing. These are all the horror stories we heard in the select committee.

I hope the test is going to be very broad for how fit a person is to operate a licence for a transport company intelligently and profitably. Also, the fitness test is going to be supplemented by a public interest test for the first five years. I hope this does not put the applicants in double jeopardy, in that they will have to prove not only that there is a need for their services, as well as the new liberalization the minister has introduced

into this, but also that they can provide a service. They have to do both, so what is new? It is not terribly changed.

If his public interest test is applied only on a very selective basis, where there is some difficulty, then that is fine. However, if everybody is going to be subjected to a public interest test simply because some other trucker objected to that licence without any real basis, then I do not think that is fair; it is counterproductive. I hope the minister can assure me that will be used sparingly and anyone who opposes the issuing of a licence will have to have a very solid case on which to base his objections before the applicant is subject to all this examination.

The bill also provides for the establishment of an advisory committee on truck transportation. I hope this does not become another provincial Liberal Senate so that we can have all kinds of appointments to it. If it is going to be so, save one for me in about four or five years because I might be looking for something like that.

Hon. Mr. Ruprecht: The member will be the first to know.

Mr. Gregory: Will I? Okay. I do hope it will not be a sort of retirement home for past friends.

Hon. Mr. Ruprecht: We like the member for Mississauga East.

Mr. Gregory: I like the member for Parkdale (Mr. Ruprecht) too. He should not tell too many people, though. I do not want to spoil my reputation.

It is important that advisory committee be more than a sounding board and that it be empowered to offer constructive advice and to do a true review to see how this thing is working after it has been in force for a while.

I am not of the view that we should be overly penalizing people with fines for infractions, but it seems to me that a fine of not less than \$150 and not more than \$1,500 for an offence is not awfully punishing. Unless great care is taken, a trucker could be mistaken and believe it is worth his while taking a chance on paying a \$1,500 fine and making much more money for having done it.

1530

We have to be a little careful. I do not think they should be drawn and quartered; at the same time, any fine should be tough enough to impress them that they had better not fool around with it. I am sure the minister will have that in mind.

I am a little disturbed by the ministerial directions to investigate. The minister and the cabinet are taking a great deal upon themselves,

almost giving themselves veto power. Perhaps the minister will explain that a little later.

The point is made that the Ontario Highway Transport Board is going to have all the authority, but there is a little subsection, 37(1), that says: "The minister may direct the board to examine and investigate such matters relating to transportation policy as the minister specifies and the board shall report thereon to the minister." Does that ministerial advice include who should get a licence and who should not? Does the minister have the right to overturn a board decision or ask it to re-examine it; and when it comes back and the board says to the minister, "We have re-examined it and found it right the first time," can the minister say, "That is too bad. I disagree. We are not going to issue that licence"?

I hope the minister is not taking that responsibility on himself. If he is not, perhaps the wording in the act should be cleaned up to make it a little clearer, because that would be very much resented.

If you will bear with me, Mr. Speaker, I am having trouble getting together my staff notes.

I have received correspondence, not only from the Ontario Trucking Association about the problems it is having with this act, but also from the Ontario Dump Truck Owners Association. In the strictest definition, this is not part of the principle of this bill, but dump truck licensing is covered under transportation.

In the Ottawa Valley area bordering on Quebec they are having many problems, and this bill presents a threat to them. They suggest that the recommendations of the select committee about 10 years ago made it easier for them to exist, because they are not overflowing with trucks but Quebec truckers are able to come across the border and take away a lot of work from Ontario truckers. This is not reciprocated; Ontario truckers cannot do the same in Quebec. They say a loosening of this licensing requirement is going to put many more dump trucks in competition with them.

It is not the same as dealing with transports. You can only fit so many of them on the highway, but if you have to travel on Hurontario Street in Mississauga you know you can put many thousands of dump trucks on any residential street at any given time. Economically, there is not necessarily room for them, but they are afraid for their livelihood. The minister is going to have to address himself to that. I hope the Ontario Dump Truck Owners Association will have the opportunity to visit with the minister

before the committee when this bill is referred to committee.

I want to mention that the list of participants the minister talked to about this legislation is very impressive. There is a list, which is lost in my notes, of 40 or 50 groups he has talked to. However, beyond having given the minister some input, I hope its role does not end there. The Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr. Riddell), for example, would say the Ontario Federation of Agriculture is the most important one he should be talking to, but if the minister were to check with every member in this House, he would find a different group that should have further consultation with him. I mentioned the Ontario Dump Truck Owners Association. There are many more, such as the gravel carriers, and some of the people from the north who will be speaking on lumber.

This is the main reason I am suggesting this bill should go to committee. Even though the minister tells us he has negotiated with each of these groups, it is only in committee that we can have an opportunity to make sure of that. I think I speak for my New Democratic Party colleagues as well; they too want to know these groups are getting across the message they want the minister to hear.

I hope he will bear that in mind. I ask him to not push to have this rammed through a committee very quickly, because I do not think it will happen. Our party would not want to stall anything, but we do want to make sure a very important industry is heard from on this matter.

I was going to go over the comparison between the old act and the new bill, but since so many people want to speak on this I will just touch on a couple of things.

The most important thing to me is the burden of proof. It was on the applicant to prove there was a need for his services; now it is on the respondents to an application to prove he should not have a licence. I think that is fair and long-needed. I have often wondered how I would react if I wanted to go into the trucking business and, in applying for a licence, found myself opposed by 20 high-priced charlatans with law degrees and legal documents. I would have only one lawyer to defend me or to prove to 20 lawyers that there was a need for my services. I have often thought that was very unfair, and I welcome that part of the bill.

The safety aspect is another important thing, because the previous act did not mention safety. It was left to inspectors. The new act does, and it

is all part of the fitness test. This is welcome. The general public is going to welcome this too.

One of the most frightening things in the world is to drive along the highway, say the Queen Elizabeth Way, or Highway 401 when travelling down east. It is night. Suddenly, you look in the rearview mirror to find big headlights above your level. They are obviously truck headlights and they are right behind you. They are hanging on to your bumper. You want to get out of the way, to move into another lane, but you cannot because there is another transport truck on your left passing you. What happens if someone in front of you suddenly stops and of necessity you have to stop, but the transport is in a position of making you into a sandwich? That is scary.

I do not think drivers of transport trucks have been properly policed or trained. There are too many infractions. Too often one finds transport drivers, because they do not want to gear down or brake or because they want to maintain their speed level, simply passing each other. They play hippity-hop up the hill. The truck that is going faster takes the passing lane. In the last experience I had with that there were three transports abreast, one in the regular curb lane, one in the next lane passing him and one in the passing lane passing them all.

1540

Mr. Haggerty: Who won?

Mr. Gregory: I slowed down. I did not want to get into that, because I thought I could only be a loser. That is scary.

I hope all of these things will be taken into consideration, because I feel the general public is frightened of transport trucks on the road. I think they have reason to be so because very many accidents have taken place. We are all aware of disasters that occur because a transport truck has jack-knifed. There was one on Highway 400 that overturned and fell on top of a group of cars, taking many lives.

I hope this is something to which the minister will address himself and be prepared to be questioned on extensively in the committee hearings. With that, I will yield the floor.

Mr. Martel: It is such good stuff. Go ahead.

Mr. Gregory: If the member is enjoying it so much, okay, fine.

Not to be repetitious, we will be supporting the bill, and we will be very pleased to do so as a matter of fact. Do not think this means we think the bill is perfect; we do not. That is a given. We will want to make some constructive criticism in committee and possibly some amendments. I

would like to hear further debate on this from my colleagues to the left—I am not really looking forward to that, but we do not have to listen to it—and possibly from some of the minister's colleagues who might not totally share his enthusiasm for the bill. One never knows.

Having done all that, I can assure the minister that we will be supporting him on second reading. We look forward to the interesting meetings we are going to have in committee, which might well last all summer long or until the next election, whichever comes first.

Mr. Wildman: I am tempted to say, "That will be a big 10-4, good buddy." I want to indicate this party will have no truck or trade with the comments my colleague has just made.

Mr. Gregory: I cannot tell members the relief I feel to know my friend the member for Algoma is not going to support my remarks. If he were, I would probably be reconsidering my position at this time.

However, I do thank him for at least sitting in his seat and listening to the very interesting remarks. Now I hope he will lend an equally attentive ear to the member for Lake Nipigon (Mr. Pouliot), who no doubt will have many interesting things to say.

Mr. Philip: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: The one-time chairman of the select committee on the highway transportation of goods, who came out strongly in favour of a regulatory system, has already changed his mind and done a flip-flop by supporting this legislation.

Mr. Chairman: That is not really a point either of order or of privilege.

Mr. Philip: I thought it was a point of interest.

M. Pouliot: Mon collègue le député de Mississauga Est (M. Gregory) a indiqué qu'il aurait peut-être quelques difficultés à écouter ses collègues, surtout ses collègues de gauche.

I want to reassure the member that if it is any easier for him, we will do it together. We will use the translating process, fully recognizing his very kind comment that this is indeed the Mecca of good manners and decorum. I hope I will not bore him too much.

I wish to join my voice to those of many in recognizing the former member for Cornwall, a person who has not only been an inspiration to the New Democratic Party of Ontario but has also been a sort of spiritual leader in matters such as transportation and communications in Ontario. Again, I welcome M. George Samis. On vous souhaite la bienvenue.

There is nothing in this legislation from which Ontarians will derive benefit. After listening to my distinguished colleague from Mississauga East, I am now convinced these bills are based on the premise of a Liberal-Conservative philosophy, a sort of trial balloon that will surely create far more problems than it will solve.

We do not have to be experts in the field of transportation to recognize that we are indeed in the midst of a campaign that promotes the removal of public interference in the economy. For some vague, bizarre or strange reason, there is a belief that the marketplace always makes the appropriate choice and that public interference is no longer the order of the day, it always chooses second best and only as a last resort will we adhere to public interference or public contribution in this matter.

We have first to realize all is not well in the transportation system. The existing legislation represents a world of yesteryear. If we are to look to the future with confidence, we must implement many changes. What the Minister of Transportation and Communications (Mr. Fulton) is proposing to do, however, is to enact a complete change from stem to stern without the proper homework.

My colleagues and I have searched long and hard to find the appropriate substance that would warrant such a move, something to justify such an overreaction and, truly, we were unable to come up with justification that warrants such a drastic move from the world of yesteryear to the world of today. At the risk of being repetitious, we have been and will continue to be very strong advocates of changes that will not reflect the world of yesterday but will reflect the world of today.

Some of the current rules are completely inappropriate; other rules are most difficult to enforce. They have become outmoded, archaic, impossible to implement and difficult to interpret. We recognize this and, with a friendly voice, we have proposed and will propose solutions that suit the world of today.

Regulation of economic activity is not a new phenomenon in this province. It is an assertion of a social right that gives people at the consumer level and at the industrial and commercial levels the right to benefit from fair play. It is an assertion of right, the same right as the right to make a profit or the right to be a private entrepreneur.

Regulations are there for a reason. They are there to protect people. They are there because there is a need. They are there because untram-

melled competition in the marketplace has not and will not meet the needs and the aspirations of the people. Regulations are there also to ensure that citizens of this province living in outlying or remote regions will not be discriminated against by virtue of the place they live.

The Minister of Transportation and Communications speaks with great fanfare and very eloquently about the need to deregulate completely an industry that represents \$3 billion and fully employs 43,000 to 45,000 people in direct jobs in Ontario.

Let us examine what has taken place in the United States where deregulation became the order the day in California in 1980. Thousands of jobs were lost, in excess of 100,000 jobs, and 350 mid-sized carriers were thrown out of business.

1550

I do not make it a habit—time is far too valuable—to read the Wall Street Journal, but my friends to the right, many of whom have mercantile attitudes, will be the first to favour the minister with a meticulous and exact definition of takeovers. That was the order of the day in the US. They will also inform the minister about mergers. The consequence has been that the very element in the economy the minister wishes to promote has been taken away. What is the element? The members have guessed it. It is the element of competition. As the big players got bigger and as the mid-sized operators got eliminated, the result was cartels and monopolies.

The very element that the minister wishes to enhance has been struck at with passion and vengeance. Consequently, today in the US there are 10 major carriers. The other people have been left holding the bag. There is no competition. That disease has carried over in anticipation of deregulation. We have seen many companies disappear. Supplementary to the fact that in excess of 100,000 people have lost their jobs in the US, many of the survivors were left with less bargaining power. Fringe benefits were taken away from them and pensions were drawn out. Concessions became the order of the day. It does not speak very highly of public relations.

Deregulation is also a safety issue. Not long ago, I tabled two petitions in the House signed by some 2,500 people who reside in the great riding of Lake Nipigon. They were concerned about the lack of safety and about the fact that the truckers seemed to have taken over the roads. It has become carnage. I have petitioned the minister on and on. I know the minister is concerned about

safety. I have not met anyone who is not concerned about safety. We have indicated positive alternatives related to safety: the expansion of the road network and the enlargement of roads or wider roads in the case of Highways 11 and 17.

We fully realize that it is much easier to put up with what one has than to come up with solutions, especially when there is a lack of money. What we have been asking from the minister is a timetable. Nowhere in the proposals regarding deregulation do we see any increase in the number of inspectors relating to or regarding safety. We do not have enough to police the present regulations, yet the minister does not see fit to make a commitment that there will be more inspectors to regulate the proposed legislation. It is a safety issue.

In the real world, when people turn to the bottom line, when they have to examine profits, what will they do? Will truck drivers be asked to drive longer hours? Will the same drivers be asked to forgo the element of safety checks of the vehicles for the mere sake of making a profit?

Regional expansion is a subject matter that cannot be neglected. It is our sincere belief that without regulation, the people of northern Ontario, the people who are trying to survive and prosper in remote regions of our province, will not receive adequate protection.

Let us review some of the proposed changes. Under the present system, the onus on the applicants is based on public necessity and convenience. They have to prove the community will benefit from their entrance into the market.

What is the minister proposing? He is proposing a sort of reverse onus regime whereby fitness will become the sole factor of entry into the marketplace. One could call it a world of the fittest. If one is fit, willing and somewhat able, he will be granted a licence, if he can obtain insurance. Nothing at all is said about a performance bond. "Come on, folks, get into the market." Consequently, a cynic would suggest that anyone who is able to breathe will be able to drive anything that is able to roll.

There is no sunset formula. The minister is not aware of it. Maybe he did not think about it. Some of his very eloquent and appropriately highly paid staff will come up with a formula that will guarantee that after five years one will still have a public responsibility. We are concerned about the lack of a sunset formula. To guarantee that the reverse onus will not be a free-for-all, we need protection for the general public. The system has worked. There is no rush

to overhaul it. However, there is a rush to address the problems that must be addressed. We recognize that.

Not only in conscience but also on the basis of reasonable questions that need to be answered, we cannot acquiesce to the minister's demand for support on this matter. We will dissent from the views of the majority.

I have in my hands what seems to be an endless list of participants in the debate that perhaps was to form the substance of the changes the minister is presenting to us, although it was very much a prelude. I see the labour movement, the people driving those trucks, the people showing a profit for the big boys. I see the Teamsters' Joint Council 52. We recognize it is there but we see it only as tokenism. There are some 40 organizations. The major players in this affair—Canadian National Railways and Canadian Pacific Railway—are not even mentioned. Van Horne must be turning in his grave.

Hon. Mr. Van Horne: No, I am still here.

Mr. Pouliot: The distinguished member for London North (Mr. Van Horne) need not apologize for still being with us. We want to wish him well.

I am quoting from an endless litany of unanswered queries. Without regulation, no one would certify that carriers have the necessary fitness to serve the public. There would be no assurance that a carrier must be properly responsible in case of loss or damage or for the collection of payments or cash-on-delivery accounts. Without regulation, it would not be possible to prevent a carrier from picking and choosing customers. There would be an absence of rules for the protection of inexperienced consumers. It would be difficult to settle disputes between shippers and carriers and between carriers and carriers when they are from hand to mouth, or should I say trip to trip.

1600

There is doubt as to who would serve small towns and communities or whether they would be served at all. The riding I represent is the size of Germany; it has 114,000 square miles. The road system ends up in Port Severn. We use Port Severn as a base of transportation to the extreme part of the province, which incidentally—and this is an omission—the electoral map of Ontario does not even recognize. It indicates that we go on and on and on. In my wildest fantasies, my wildest dreams, I begin to see the earth's curvature when I go up north; a riding 1,100 miles long.

It borders on audacity. We have nothing against backhaul, but we feel, with all the

sincerity at our command, that the right homework was not done, that somewhere the minister has experienced a digestive process. One could never accuse the Liberal Party of moving too quickly. If patience is a virtue, we will go to the higher house. They have sinned for a long, long time.

It is a shocking document, without substance. We are not opposed to change. The fine people around me, the ones with the social conscience—and being an educated man, Mr. Speaker, you can readily acquiesce in which ones they are—are saying more work needs to be done.

Without regulation, there would be no effective protection against monopoly pricing and destructive competition. The minister should make a believer of us. He should give us the reasons we should believe that such a massive document will serve the benefit of Ontario, that this is not a witchhunt or a change for the sake of changing. I wish to believe. We are asking to believe. We believe in change, but we do not believe that, without regulations, the interests of Ontarians will be best served.

Quand on parle de l'industrie du camionnage, on parle d'une industrie de \$3 milliards, avec quelque 44,000 ou 45,000 employés. Or ce n'est pas une petite affaire; c'est beaucoup. On parle d'une industrie avec laquelle les Ontariens, depuis la Confédération, ont appris à vivre.

Vous savez, Monsieur le Président, il n'y a aucune pression. La pression pour des changements, je l'ai expliquée tout à l'heure, mais personne ne nous dit que le système, dans son entier, devrait être révisé pour servir une idéologie désuète, périmée, une idéologie basée sur les Conservateurs et les Libéraux. Ce sont deux vieux partis politiques.

M. Wildman: Oui, d'accord.

M. Pouliot: Ce sont deux vieux partis politiques qui ont su et qui sauront toujours servir les intérêts des entrepreneurs qui, eux, n'ont pas les mêmes intérêts que les consommateurs. C'est bien facile. Moi, je comprends ça. Ce n'est pas moins que ça, et ce n'est pas plus que ça non plus.

In conclusion, if our memories were short, we would be tempted to believe, because they appear to perspire sincerity, and again with a great lack of substance. Excuse the pun, I am not given to humour, it is not my forte, but we would be taken for a ride, a hayride as well.

We encourage the minister to come up with changes. He is on a roll. He has had courage, and he should be commended. We are saying to the minister that we will support those changes under the present regulation. On the other hand, in

conscience, for the sake of safety, for the sake of northerners and for the sake of our brothers and sisters in the labour movement, without absolute and total guarantees, we cannot take a chance on the future.

Mr. Fontaine: My honourable friend is speaking for the big companies and for the big unions right now on this.

Mr. Pouliot: I am not very familiar with the working of companies. I am not a shareholder, but if it is permissible, I invite my good friend, who shares the same problems I have, to consult in a climate of solidarity as opposed to indulging in mere verbiage. He too does not come up with the right answers.

Mr. Sargent: I welcome this chance to talk about the trucking industry, about the benefits and opportunities and about the need for trucking reform, which is long overdue. We have been talking for the last 20 years about the—

Mr. Wildman: The member should not pay any attention to the speech that was written for him.

Mr. Sargent: About the only thing I know is what is on this paper.

The facts are there and we realize the monopoly control of many firms in the trucking industry. I welcome to the House today George Samis, who was one of the finest members in the House during his term here. He was a good hockey player too. I welcome him on the Ontario Highway Transport Board. I know he will be a good voice for all of Ontario.

This legislation is long overdue. The existing legislation does not meet the needs of the trucking industry or those of the users of transportation services. The previous Public Commercial Vehicles Act, enacted in the 1920s with the initial purpose of protecting the railways from competition, is no longer applicable.

Restrictions of entry to the industry are costly and time-consuming and have made it very difficult to get into the trucking business. Consequently, innovative services have been stifled and in many cases transportation costs are higher than they need be. The legislation has also become very difficult to enforce.

Estimates are that 20 per cent of the trucking industry and the traffic moving is contrary to the act. The PCV Act simply does not recognize current needs and marketplace realities.

The member for Lake Nipigon spoke of the need for greater truck safety. A major thrust of the reform package is to improve truck safety. To achieve that objective, performance will be

examined upon entry to the industry by means of a fitness test and continued monitoring of the performance of all operators by requiring them to hold a commercial vehicle operator's registration. Any operator, private or for hire, may face suspension or cancellation of operating privileges for continued violation of the applicable laws.

This legislation will stimulate the Ontario economy and I congratulate the minister for bringing this forward now. Transportation has become increasingly important as a cost of doing business. Freer entry and a greater degree of competitiveness in both price and service are crucial to Ontario's manufacturing and industrial base in its efforts to compete, particularly in the international marketplace.

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A stated purpose of the Truck Transportation Act is to be of benefit to the users of transportation services. Equally important is the need to enhance small-business opportunities. This new legislation will enhance small-business opportunities both for those desiring to enter into the trucking business and for users of trucking services, particularly in the outlying areas and northern Ontario, which often complain that existing legislation fails to provide them with a cost-effective transportation service. The legislation will encourage the growth of both local and special carriers able to service the needs of the community.

The need to reduce transportation costs is a high priority. Because increased competition as a result of freer entry will invariably lead to lower costs, lower transportation rates are necessary if Ontario business is to be competitive.

Mr. Philip: Where is the proof of that?

Mr. Sargent: We will get to you in a moment.

In markets such as the United States, where shippers large and small have benefited from lower costs, ultimately lower transportation costs will benefit consumers.

To improve transportation services, the new legislation will encourage new and innovative trucking services to the marketplace, which has increased its demands for a tailored, specialized and efficient service. Entrants to the industry will be able to offer such services as they see fit. They can customize and not be subject to some of the spurious limitations that now exist.

To maintain a dependable trucking industry, it is the objective of the legislation that a dependable trucking industry be maintained. A fitness test, a performance monitoring through CVOR—commercial vehicle operator registration—will

ensure that a fair and competitive environment is created.

These three bills do the following: The Truck Transportation Act replaces the Public Commercial Vehicles Act; the Highway Traffic Amendment Act brings in commercial vehicle operator's registration, and in the Ontario Highway Transport Board Amendment Act, an internal appeal process replaces cabinet petitions and disciplinary review powers.

What are the pressures for reform? In the US, the reforms essentially deregulated the US trucking industry. Trade volume increased and there was growth in transport movement by truck. The present legislation is outdated, and a lot of it is almost unenforceable. Other pressures for reform are the need to reduce transportation costs and the need to improve service options.

This legislation is long overdue and is a tribute to the minister. I welcome further debate as this goes on.

Mr. Pouliot: I welcome the comments by the member for Grey-Bruce (Mr. Sargent), but with respect, I would point out again to the member that the province does not have the necessary complement of personnel to police the safety aspects of the existing regulations. With the onslaught of newcomers into the market, it will not suffice.

Again I remind the member for Grey-Bruce that the minister did not see fit to address what is not a potential problem but a real problem. They have a problem now, and there is no direction, no intent to address the problem in terms of safety inspectors.

Regardless of the safety provisions, in this proposed dog-eat-dog world, when competition is supposedly so fierce—for a while, at the beginning it may well be that way—and when profits are trimmed to the bone, expenses will follow suit. It will be an invitation to the truckers to keep those trucks on the road longer. The tires will get a little balder, if there is any such term, or the threads will get somewhat thinner. Unless we have very strong legislation, we will have a potential nightmare in terms of enforcement. The public will again be left holding the bag in this affair. It is important that this be mentioned.

Mr. Philip: In 12 years in the Legislature, this is the first time I have ever seen that member, who is always so enthusiastic and exuberant in his comments, read a speech that was prepared for him. It is a little sad because I do not think he believes in that particular speech.

He made the statement, as a small businessman, that in the US deregulation reduced costs.

Has he talked to any of the small businessmen in the US who, as a result of deregulation, have had trouble getting servicing and, in the case of the airline industry, are actually paying very large amounts to go from one small city to another to do business? Has he talked to any of these businessmen? If so, how can he possibly favour a deregulation program similar to that in the US, which he seems to advocate?

Mr. Sargent: There is an old saying that if you have been doing it this way for a long time, it is probably wrong. We have been involved in this legislation since 1920. It is time for it to be revamped. The member can throw stones as much as he wants to, but the minister has to be given credit. It is pretty fresh and it is great stuff.

Mr. Bernier: I rise to join the debate and I open my remarks to the minister in a complimentary way. As my colleague the member for Mississauga East (Mr. Gregory) has pointed out, this legislation has been around for some considerable time. Those of us from northern Ontario know very well that the deregulation aspect of the trucking industry is something we have been looking at during that period of time. I guess it goes back to 1974 or 1975.

I can recall vividly the former member for Cochrane North, René Piché, in the very loud and vocal action group of which the present member for Cochrane North (Mr. Fontaine) was also a part. It was made up of mayors and reeves from the northeastern Ontario corridor who used to come down to Queen's Park on a regular basis and drop in on various cabinet ministers and committees to promote deregulation in the hope that the free enterprise system would move in with a little more enthusiasm, with the end result of lowering costs.

For these reasons alone, we must commend the minister for having that free-enterprise spirit and for moving ahead in the right direction. There is no question about it. To repeat what the minister says in the explanatory notes, "The bill changes the entry test from an examination of the need for additional service to an examination of the fitness of the applicant." We on this side fully agree.

The explanation goes on further to say: "At the time of the application, the applicant or an employee must hold a certificate of competency which will be obtained by passing a written test. This test will cover that prospective truckers have knowledge of safe truck operation...."

This is the point I would like to address this afternoon. We commend the minister for his new framework for governing the trucking industry.

The new thrust is something we all encourage. The licensing of the owner-operator is in his best interest and is in the public interest. However, the question of safety on the highway is something we in the northwest have a real concern about.

As the minister is very much aware, a committee has been set up in my area known as the PAUL committee. It has its offices in Dryden. It is People Against Unsafe Loghauling. It was established by a young lady who lost her husband in a log-hauling incident on the Trans-Canada Highway when a major pulpwood spill occurred. She took up the cause and has pulled together a very active committee of which she is the secretary. She lives in Dryden and her name is Lori Madder. The chairperson of the committee is the Rev. Ken Rentz. They have attracted much attention in the northwest with respect to the control and enforcement of the hauling of pulpwood in the northwest.

1620

The member for Lake Nipigon made some reference to safety on the highways, as did my own colleague the member for Mississauga East. To best explain the situation, I will put on record a letter that was directed to the minister on December 22, 1986, with respect to the serious situation that is occurring in northwestern Ontario. Before I do that, I want to say, having been in government and having been part of trying to resolve that issue, there was a safety committee established with representatives from the Ministry of Transportation and Communications, the Ministry of Northern Affairs and the industry.

That committee met on a regular basis to review the hauling habits and type of enforcement patrols needed for the movement of thousands of cords of pulpwood on the major highways of northwestern Ontario. They did come up with some studies. The ministry at that time advanced something like \$100,000 for certain studies that were conducted in the northwest. New equipment was tried, and some money was put into the Quetico centre to set up a truck training program to train drivers in the actual operation of pulp-hauling.

There has been some movement in the right direction, but I question whether it is sufficient to answer the needs of the general public. To move further on the issue, I will put on the record the contents of that letter directed to the minister. It reads as follows:

"The members of PAUL are becoming increasingly concerned about the growing number of log spills and the increasing laxity in

enforcement on highway regulations and spot checking of log trucks. There have been several major spills this fall and early winter.

"November: The CBC radio reported a spill near Thunder Bay in which an oncoming vehicle was damaged when it ran into the spilled logs. November 24: Log spill on the Red Lake Highway. November 25: Log spill on the Red Lake Highway. December 2: Log spill near Sioux Lookout. October: An Avis rental van, rented to Monad Construction, had a side window broken while passing a log truck. The driver believed it to be from a log. December 16: An OPP vehicle was damaged by a protruding log."

There is a copy of a newspaper clipping sent with the letter to elaborate on the problem in that area: "A 23-year-old Dinorwic man has been charged with driving with an insecure load after a protruding log from a pulp truck he was driving knocked the roof lights off a Sioux Lookout OPP cruiser." That will give members some idea of the seriousness of the situation when pulp trucks move down the highway and literally take off the top of a police cruiser.

"These incidents are but the 'tip of the iceberg,'" the letter goes on to point out. "They are the ones that we know about because of media attention. There are spills that are not reported because they are in less public places. We in PAUL have been monitoring the trucks as they come into Dryden on a regular basis. We find that the security of loads has greatly deteriorated in the past year or two. See enclosed pictures which are not unusual but almost the norm. Daily we witness loads enter Dryden and the mill yard, with logs protruding beyond the limits, with cables slack and loads not crowned. The enclosed pictures could be multiplied many times. They indicate the kinds of loads that pass through town.

"We have been told by persons from both the highway department and the OPP that enforcement and spot-checking has become less because of cutbacks in personnel. We believe this to be both unwise and dangerous. The government, by not enforcing regulations, is playing Russian roulette with the lives of people who share the highways with the log trucks. We think this to be a very dangerous policy.

"Where is the monitoring committee that was set up after the two young men were killed in January 1983? Has this committee been abandoned? If so, why? And the safety committee that was set up, is it also now defunct? If it meets, we certainly have no indication of that. We want

some answers as to why the process set in motion in 1983 appears now to be abandoned. Must we have another tragedy to get things back on track?

"There will be another tragedy if the present trends are allowed to continue. We urge the government to increase enforcement and the penalties for insecure loads.

"Please answer our questions regarding the monitoring committee and the safety committee that were supposed to be ongoing committees. Also, what has happened to the recommendations of the Forest Engineering Research Institute of Canada report? Have they also been set aside? And why are the scales east of Dryden and in Vermilion Bay closed so much? Is this part of the cutback policy? If so, it is one that should be reversed immediately. I do not want to have to minister to other families who have lost loved ones because we do not take the necessary steps to keep the logs on the trucks where they belong.

"I await your early reply to our concerns and our questions."

Copies of that went out to me and to the traffic programs branch of the Ontario Provincial Police.

That gives the minister an idea of the problem facing the northwest. We all realize that the pulpwood industry and the sawmill industry are vital to northwestern Ontario. The jobs these industries create add to the economic benefits of that area. We do not want to jeopardize them in any way, but there is that question of safety on the highway.

As my colleague the member for Cochrane North has pointed out to me privately, in the northeast they do not have that problem to that great an extent because they have gone to what is called full-length logging. Loads are piled on a lengthwise basis. They are not crosswise. This diminishes the amount of wood that each truck can carry, and with that comes added costs.

There comes a time that we must look at the cost vis-à-vis the safety factor. As we move through this bill and as we go through committee stage, I hope these issues will be addressed. I hope that as the committees are established and with the new licensing procedure for the owner-operators of our transportation system, we will be able to come up with some answers to this serious problem.

In closing, I want to compliment the minister again for bringing this bill forward. As the critic has pointed out, our party is anxiously looking forward to the committee hearings and to having a good, healthy debate on the various issues that

have been brought forward, particularly safety for people of northwestern Ontario.

Mr. Philip: The member makes the same statement that has been made by both Liberals and Conservatives in this House without any proof. It is a matter of ideology and a matter of faith, but I ask the member to show any proof that deregulation will reduce prices in the long run. I ask him to give us any proof of that. I have not heard one member, including this member, who is able to provide that proof.

The member talks about how this bill will somehow improve safety on the highway. In fact, if we look at the European situations and at other jurisdictions, the safest highway systems are those that have a regulated trucking industry.

If the member was so concerned about highway safety, why did his party do so little to implement the report of the select committee on highway safety or to copy some of the techniques that have been used in Europe for so many years to ensure highway safety?

Deregulation has invariably meant that companies desperate to stay in business under excessive competition often cut back and operate in an unsafe manner. If he does not believe that, all he has to do is look at what has happened in the US and see how many airplanes have come down in the past few years after deregulation.

1630

Mr. Gregory: I want to compliment the member for his remarks. He expressed the views of a member concerned about his riding in northern Ontario. It is a legitimate concern. I agree with him on his viewpoint on the bill, and the bill will go a long way towards rectifying the problem.

I am always amazed that whenever the word "deregulation" is used, the members of the party of last resort tend to fall apart. They tend to get all dewy-eyed when anybody mentions deregulation. It does not matter what it is. I swear, if they could regulate animals, they would do so. They get so excited it is almost worth repeating the word "deregulation" to see the reaction because it is so humorous.

Mr. Speaker: You are referring to the remarks by the member for Kenora (Mr. Bernier), are you?

Mr. Gregory: I certainly am. I am reflecting on the intelligent remarks of the member for Kenora, which are being responded to by the unintelligent remarks of the party of last resort.

Mr. Pouliot: I have far too much respect for the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to enter into

a sparring contest with my friend the member for Mississauga East. The member for Kenora, who was not repetitious, has emphasized a situation that is really chaotic—we cannot say it too often—which is the safety element, especially as it pertains to northern Ontario.

Over the last while, although it has been going on for some time, people have become literally petrified to use, as a privilege, like anyone else, the roads of Ontario. What scares people, and rightly so, is not only that under the proposal there is no guarantee that the increased heavy traffic will be sanctioned and monitored but also that the government of Ontario has failed to meet the present standards. Thus, it is difficult for us to believe that if the government is not doing the job that needs to be done right now, it can give any guarantee, and be sincere at the same time, that somewhere in the future, be it near or distant, it will have the policies and the manpower in place. The government has made no commitment. Its budget has been reduced. Those are facts of life.

Mr. Speaker: Are you directing your comments to the member for Kenora?

Mr. Pouliot: It is the same as responding to the comments of the member for Kenora, although at times it is almost transparent. It is a philosophy. What is needed is reregulation, not deregulation.

Mr. Sargent: I want to compliment the member for Kenora on his concern for the log-hauling industry. In the ministry there is a great concern for and awareness of the problems in the log-hauling industry. They are on top of it.

Mr. Morin-Strom: I want to express concern that the member for Kenora has not reflected the interests of his riding with respect to the kinds of service we can expect under a deregulated trucking industry. The evidence from the United States is that, in hard-to-service areas such as we see in northern Ontario, deregulation will have very difficult consequences in terms of the costs we are going to have to pay for the trucking of our material, the number of carriers that will be willing to serve northern Ontario and whether we will have service provided at all to some of the small communities in northern Ontario.

The member should be concerned about the consequences that have been seen in the US and that we anticipate happening across the north. The evidence is that the major carriers compete fiercely for the high-traffic areas. One expects there is going to be heavy competition on Highway 401.

We have seen what has happened in the airline industry from the deregulation the federal gov-

ernment imposed on northern Ontario. The carriers are abandoning the north. Air Canada is abandoning northern Ontario. We are losing jet service into communities in northern Ontario. The price of air service is increasing in northern Ontario, not going down, as a result of deregulation. We have seen it very heavily in the community of Sault Ste. Marie. The member should be reflecting on that experience and hoping we will be looking at what will provide better services for the north, not worse services.

Mr. Speaker: Do any other members have comments or questions? If not, the member for Kenora has up to two minutes to respond.

Mr. Bernier: I am somewhat amazed to sit here and listen to the third party, a party that refers to itself as a reform party. As has been pointed out by the member for Grey-Bruce, these are the same ground rules the trucking industry has been dealing with since 1920. Some reform party. They want to stick around with the same rules we have had for so many years because the union bosses—and believe me, the Teamsters control that party over there; they were told how to react to this bill, because they know the effect it will have on the Teamsters' control over the trucking industry in the province.

Mr. Wildman: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I suggest the former minister is imputing motives. That is against the rules of the House.

Mr. Speaker: I feel he was expressing a point of view. I will ask the honourable member to reconsider his comments; I know he will be considerate.

Mr. Bernier: I will reconsider, but I still have a very strong point of view that there is control coming down on that party from outside sources. While they talk of being a reform party, the progressive part of this Legislature is on this side of the House, in this party. Now we have the Liberal Party joining us after all these years of public debate right across northern Ontario.

The people of northern Ontario have asked for deregulation. At public hearings, committee after committee has asked for deregulation. I am confident that when this act is in place, we will see the changes we in northern Ontario want in place.

Mr. Philip: I find it unfortunate that the previous speaker could not respond to the legitimate questions we had of his slogans, his glib statements about what would happen, and his completely unresearched clichés. Instead, he

had to resort to attacking our motives in a shameless manner.

I rise without hesitation to say I have some grave concerns about this bill. I have felt as strongly and emotionally about few bills that have come before this House, in terms of the need for the bill to go completely to committee to have proper public input. While the minister may come up with a long list of various people he has consulted with, he is silent in his comments about what those people have said and about whether he has listened to them.

I think the committee hearings will show over and over again that many people in the industry, many small businesses—and even the trade unions the Conservative Party seems to be so punishing of—

Mr. Wildman: Paranoid.

Mr. Philip: —and paranoid about, have some very grave concerns about all or part of this bill.

1640

In 1977, as a fairly new member of this Legislature since 1976, I had the marvellous learning experience of serving on the select committee on the highway transportation of goods. At that time, we had the unusual situation of the Liberal Party being publicly on record as favouring a completely deregulated system.

To their credit, both Liberal critics—Patrick Reid, a northerner, and Eric Cunningham, a southerner—after hearing the testimony before the committee, became very strong regulationists. They believed in the regulatory system with the reforms that were needed. They were advocates of the very reforms we in the New Democratic Party were suggesting and the industry itself was proposing. After the testimony, they said: "We are sorry; we were wrong. The slogans, the Adam Smith theories, do not hold up in Ontario, nor do they hold up in parts of Europe that we visited, after meeting with various people from industry, labour and the trucking industry."

I have a lot of respect for Mr. Cunningham. He joined with me under the minority Conservative government when Mr. Snow did a flip-flop from his original position and tried to introduce deregulation in this House. I recall Mr. Cunningham and I going to the then House leader of the Conservative Party and saying, "If you call this bill, we will defeat it." That was the position of the Liberal Party at that time. It was a pragmatic party that said, "We will look at something and if it works, if it makes economic sense, we will go along with it."

Instead, what we see today is a Liberal Party that says: "The federal Conservative government believes in the open-door policy. It believes in the deregulatory system. It believes in free trade, and transportation is a key part of that so-called free trade. Therefore, we are going to go along with that kind of thing."

I can understand that flip-flop by the Liberal government. Indeed, the federal Liberal government before Mulroney—

Interjection.

Mr. Philip: If the member has a comment, I will be happy to sit down and let him make a speech or read a speech, which is what the previous Liberal member seemed to be doing. Now that it is suddenly quiet, I will continue my speech.

Interjection.

Mr. Philip: I write my stuff. I do not have a prepared speech such as the member for Grey-Bruce had. I have never seen a once-enthusiastic member degenerate like this. He would get up and give speeches in this House right from his gut and he knew his facts from his head. Today we had the pathetic performance of his reading a speech that was prepared by somebody in the back rooms of the Liberal Party.

The Liberal Party at that time realized what deregulation would do to the industry in this province. The experience of the committee was able to show them the exact problem. The committee went to great lengths to ensure that our inquiry would be open and fair and that it would consider the views of all who wanted to be consulted.

We pointed out that the implementation of our recommendations—somebody told me this weighs 12 pounds. I do not know, I have not weighed it, but it is more than 700 pages in length. It made some proposals that would correct some of the problems in the regulated transportation industry in this province.

In our first chapter, having met with the Europeans, having had the benefit of the Australians coming to Ontario to testify before our committee, having heard from the deregulationists and the regulationists, and having visited with the various industries, including the chambers of commerce and some of those who were in favour of deregulation, we concluded that the basic principle is that if economic regulation is to work in Ontario, transportation must be viewed as a system, a complex whole, a set of connected things or parts or a set of co-ordinated doctrines. Indeed, that is basically what has been done over a period of time.

I am not one of those who believe in regulation or deregulation as a matter of faith. I believe a system of transportation must deliver services at the best possible price and must give equal balance to the trucking industry and, indeed, the consumer.

If we look at what is said on the other side, I am afraid we have the opposite. When I visited Washington not so long ago as part of an interparliamentary exchange, in meeting with people from the American side and with some US congressmen, I was astonished at the way certain among them—particularly Republicans, but a few Democrats, though not very many—viewed the whole deregulation issue. I would say to them, "In this instance, deregulation has brought these results." I would be met with, "But free enterprise is good." I would say, "But it did not work in this instance. This town is not getting any airline service, whereas before it did," and the answer would be, "We are all for free enterprise."

Slogans do not deliver the goods. Slogans do not deliver the transportation. What they have in the US is a system that was working relatively well. The Interstate Commerce Commission was beyond reproach in terms of honesty and in terms of the manner in which it operated. In things such as conflict of interest, it set standards that could be followed by any country in the world, and there was a lot to learn from it.

Our committee pointed out that the movement of goods dramatically affects all industries. We stated that, furthermore, the government is elected to run the province rationally. A government is continually defining plans and striving towards certain goals that it feels are in the public interest. The establishment of goals and objectives is an integral part of the corporate and public administration. The government is answerable to the public on the basis of the objectives it sets and the way it tries to achieve the success of those efforts.

Transportation is not the same as any other business. It is more analogous to the pipeline. One does not deregulate the pipeline. It is an essential. If transportation disappears from a town, be it rail transportation, trucking transportation or air transportation, there are disastrous consequences to that town. Indeed, many economists have argued, and if one looks at the history of transportation one can see, that there are, either through direct planning or through indirect planning, major effects, such as whether cities grow, whether they do not grow, whether they

live, whether they die, whether certain businesses thrive or whether they go into receivership.

1650

Transportation is one of the largest sectors of the Canadian economy. It has revenues of more than \$30 billion and Ontario generates roughly 40 per cent of that. If we are going to tinker with a system, we had better be sure about what we are doing. My friend the member for Grey-Bruce has said to me often, "If it isn't broken, don't fix it."

Interjection.

Mr. Philip: I say to the minister, with respect, "You have not proved that it is broken yet, sir." If it is not broken, do not fix it. If a patient needs a Band-Aid on his finger, do not take out his appendix; it is as simple as that. The government is playing into the hands of the American continentalists, the philosophy stemming out of the federal Conservative government.

In 1977, the select committee summarized its arguments in support and against deregulation of the trucking industry as follows, and these are the essential issues we are dealing with.

It said there were traditional arguments in support of regulation centred on the following beliefs about deregulation, namely, that it would: lead to chaos; result in noncompensatory truck-load rates; limit the supply of trucks; result in poorer service and/or higher rates to small communities; result in more unsafe trucks; impede technological development by loss of capital-investment motive; lead to instability of employment; and simply would not have the effect that the proponents felt it would, namely, the reduction of rates.

Those who favoured deregulation, on the other hand, claimed that regulation resulted in: higher costs; misallocation of resources, namely, empty backhauls; and an uncompetitive supply market.

Interestingly enough, when we looked at those, particularly the arguments about higher costs, we were able to compare similar jurisdictions, similarly sized cities, similar economies in Alberta and Saskatchewan. One of the interesting things is that whereas Saskatchewan had a regulatory system and Alberta had a deregulatory system, when we compared costs over the same distance with the same products, we found there were no differences in cost. In fact, deregulation did not reduce cost.

What we found was that it often resulted in bankruptcies, in people getting into the business who were not able to handle that kind of business properly because they did not have the background and experience. Indeed, experience

shows that it resulted in dislocation of some companies in the trucking industry.

We also proposed a number of changes that would make it easier and more competitive to get into the trucking business, while at the same time keeping that kind of balance. The committee found:

"Without regulation: no one would certify that carriers have the necessary fitness to serve the public; there would be no assurance that a carrier must be properly responsible in case of loss and damage, or for the collection and payment of COD accounts; it would not be possible to prevent a carrier from picking and choosing customers," from skimming, in the traditional words of the trade.

"There would be an absence of rules for the protection of inexperienced consumers...when they have their household goods moved; it would be difficult to settle disputes between shippers and carriers and between carriers and other carriers; there would be a tendency in some cases for carriers to charge what the market would bear; there is doubt as to who would serve small towns and communities or whether they would be served at all; it is expected that big shippers would wring concessions out of small carriers; it would be awkward to come to the aid of the consumer who found that his only recourse in a transportation dispute was to go to court" to sue a company that might or might not exist.

"There would be no effective protection against monopoly pricing and destructive competition; the customers of the transport companies would not have channels for complaints other than to the carriers themselves" or to the courts; "new products would be less likely to be marketed without a stable transportation system."

I think of that last one as a key to what we have to look at. I said earlier that transportation is not like any other business. We are not in favour of regulating all businesses. I want competition in supermarkets, in dry goods stores and in restaurants. That is healthy. We in the New Democratic Party believe in a mixed and competitive economy.

But when it comes to transportation, which is so essential to all other industries, the minister must have a system that is dependable and reliable and that business and communities, regardless of their size, can count on. If the minister introduces legislation that will in any way tinker with that system, he had better be pretty sure of what he is doing. In reading this bill, I frankly do not have that assurance.

Let me tell members about some of the experiences I have had with the regulation versus deregulation of industry as someone who has studied it for some time. I think even the member for Mississauga East, in all humility, will admit that I wrote a good part of the report, along with Mr. Moffatt and himself, that he signed as chairman.

Mr. Gregory: I had something to do with it too.

Mr. Philip: I said that. If the member would kindly listen, I am sure he would not have these problems.

Mr. Callahan: Did he do the index?

Mr. Philip: I believe he did the index. Of course, if the member for Mississauga East had really written major sections of this, he would be somewhat more shy about admitting he had done a flip-flop and changed his mind on all the principal issues to which he had signed his name. If it was his work, then how can he explain his sudden complete change? How is it that in a few years, the very principles to which he put his name suddenly are no longer valid?

Mr. Callahan: It is flexible.

Mr. Philip: The member for Brampton says it is flexible.

Mr. Callahan: Thank you for telling the people I am here.

Mr. Philip: I know the member for Brampton has more positions on these issues than Masters and Johnson. If that is what he calls flexibility, then so be it. Maybe it pleases somebody; I do not know. I will not ask who.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr. Philip: If we look at the Australian experience of deregulation, we see what can happen. In Australia, there is deregulation of the industry. We had an opportunity to have appear before our committee at that time some of the key executives of some of the largest transportation companies in the world, which were operating in Australia. I can remember very well questioning one of the executives, who happened to be an executive of a British company that was one of the largest transportation companies in the world and one of the largest ones in Australia.

I said to him, "If you were operating in the Canadian market or the Ontario market and you had a deregulatory system, what would you do?" He said, "Very simply, I would do the same thing as I did in Australia. I would run on the main routes and take my trucks off the bad routes, the

less profitable routes. I would undercut the market for two years. I would buy up competitors as they were about to go into receivership, and then, as I did in Australia, I would raise the price and gain back in six months what I lost in two years, but I would have a monopoly, or close to it."

He said: "That is what I did in Australia. That was my job. I regretted doing it, from a conscience point of view, but from the business point of view, it was the only thing I could do."

1700

We looked at the British experience. Before the Liberal Party had a change of heart as a result of all the overwhelming evidence against its position, it was saying, "They deregulated in Britain, and nothing particularly disastrous happened." We sat down in Britain with both the trucking industry and the unions. They told us that nothing disastrous happened. But what one is talking about in the British experience is a very small country with very short routes, a high concentration of goods and a highly organized trade union system.

If you tried in Britain any of the things that deregulated companies have tried here or in the US, you would not get shipped. The shippers would go on strike. They would refuse to load your trucks. What they had was a regulatory system. The unions were so well organized that nobody tried anything that would be in any way comparable to the things that have happened in the US under a deregulated system.

Sure, one can deregulate if somebody else is regulated. The government does not have to regulate if somebody else is already running an efficient system. In the case of Canada and the US, we do not have that kind of system. In the case of Canada and the US, we have a system with very long distances and in many cases a completely different economic system to that in a small, highly concentrated, centralized country.

If one looks at the history of regulation, it basically started in the late 19th century, when the railways in the US had a monopoly and were gouging the public. At that time, it was decided that it would make some sense to regulate to protect the industry. The most capitalistic, the most free-enterprise of all countries, the US, decided a regulatory system was needed.

In the 1930s, the motor carriers had become a major mode of freight transportation. Then during the Great Depression, the cut-throat competition in transportation became so excessive that, to preserve a transportation system in the US and to protect any kind of consistency of

service to the consumer, it became absolutely necessary to impose the kind of regulatory system we have seen until recent years.

If one looks at the airline industry, one sees the disastrous effect of deregulation in the US. The airline deregulation, which was initiated in 1977, was supported by only one airline company. That was American Airlines. A few years ago, I had an opportunity to meet with a retired executive of American Airlines.

He said: "We advocated deregulation, thinking that we, as a company, could get all that business. We could skim off, we could undercut everybody, and we would become the big boys." One can see what has happened. He said, "If you think deregulation is bad now, just wait and see what happens in another five years when those stretch DC-8s start coming down."

Mr. Callahan: Down where?

Mr. Philip: All you have to do is look at what happened last year in the United States, see how many airline crashes there were and you will know exactly where. They are coming down on the heads of the people. There was a tremendous increase last year in air-traffic disasters in the United States.

It only makes sense. In a transportation industry, which is not a high-profit industry, you have to have enough money and enough stability in order to plan for capital replacement. You have to be able to plan on the equipment you are going to need not just now but also in the years ahead.

In the United States, there are a lot of fly-by-night airlines that came in and bought old DC-8s and are flying them around on the gravy train from New York to Miami, New York to Fort Lauderdale and New York to the Bahamas. Sure, they can undercut the market for a while, but if you look at the number of bankruptcies in the United States, if you look at the tremendous increase in costs in going from one small city in the United States to another small city, you can see the disastrous effect on small business and on the airline industry.

Sure, on a short-term basis perhaps a few people who want to benefit from a trip south during the cold weather can get a cheaper deal; but in the long run, deregulation means there will be less safety, less new equipment will be bought and shortcuts will be taken. We have only to look at some of the astounding figures and studies on some of the larger, better-known airlines concerning inspections that have been done on their planes to see just how many safety problems there have been. When one has done certain

studies on any of those planes recently, one can see what deregulation does.

Deregulation's effect on safety in the trucking industry is less dramatic. We do not see trucks falling from the skies.

Mr. Callahan: Gee, I hope not.

Mr. Philip: The member for Brampton does, but that is his problem.

What we have here is a system I find astonishing. The federal, Conservative, Mulroney government wants to set up a free trade system. Those of us who have interacted with our colleagues in the United States know exactly what the price is, and part of the price is that they want a deregulated trucking industry, the same way as they have managed to create the disasters of a deregulated trucking system in the US.

In talking to them about the reality that we want to do things our way, that we have a system that has worked, an efficient transportation system that needs some change but can be changed without throwing out the baby with the bath water, I find they simply throw out the ideology that this is free enterprise.

There is nothing free about small businessmen not getting service. There is nothing free about airlines going into receivership. There is nothing free about trade unionists losing their jobs, as has happened in the US, where in a period of five years something like one third of the unionized, well-paying jobs disappeared. There is nothing free in some people getting a better, more lucrative service on certain key routes while everybody else suffers. There is nothing free about that.

Transportation is an essential, key service. We have to build in a system that has a balance between competition and the ability of transportation corporations to plan, to buy new equipment, to pay decent wages and to train their employees. This bill does not do that.

This bill follows the American route in a blind fashion and that is why I have no alternative but to vote against it. I find it very sad that the Liberal government in Ontario has parted from the lessons learned in the past by such Liberal critics as Mr. Cunningham and Mr. Reid.

1710

Mr. Wildman: And Dick Smith.

Mr. Philip: And Dick Smith, who is by far one of the greatest parliamentarians and greatest human beings I have ever met in this game and who served on the committee with me. I understand I saw him in his declining years when he was extremely sick. People said, "If you think

he is a great man now, you should have seen him when he was healthy." He was a man who understood the transportation industry and a man who was big enough to say: "Our party is wrong. The evidence is overwhelmingly against this kind of silliness." That is why Eric Cunningham, Pat Reid and, may God bless him, the late Dick Smith signed this report.

I find it disappointing that the member for Mississauga East, who chaired that committee, feels it necessary to go on side with the Mulroneyites, that party not of last resort but of no resort, and to support his federal colleagues in this blind thrust towards free trade.

I look forward to the deliberations in committee. I look forward to the presentations that will be made. Members may be sure that we will be supporting modest reform. We have always supported modest reform. Members may recall that I, along with my colleagues, forced the inquiry into the Ontario Highway Transport Board. That resulted in a number of regulatory changes and a number of improvements.

Mr. Haggerty: Your former colleague is a member of it now.

Mr. Philip: I am sorry, but I cannot hear the member's interjection. If he is going to mumble, then I ask him not to interject.

Mr. Haggerty: Your colleague is a member of that board now.

Mr. Philip: My colleague is a member of that board now; indeed, he was so much in favour of a systematic, regulated system that we will have in the new domed stadium a properly regulated beer-in-the-ball-park system. That is how much he was in favour of a properly regulated system. Indeed, there will be a regulated transportation system. As a matter of fact, I have talked to the people concerned in the domed stadium and they say people can come up one aisle and transport their beer down the other aisle. They have all this in hand.

This bill does not cover it but Mr. Samis covered it, and if it had not been for him we might not have had that kind of system.

With those remarks, which Mr. Samis finds somewhat amusing, I will give way to other people. I would be happy to answer any questions anyone wishes to ask.

Mr. Gregory: It is always interesting to listen to the designated blabber of the New Democratic Party. It is fine to be a reformer such as my friend if one is blessed with selective memory. The member for Etobicoke has never been shy. We call him Mr. Modesty, but he certainly is not

that. He seems to forget. I notice a number of comments such as, "When I wrote that report," "When I wrote this" and "When I did that." He takes credit for putting it together, along with his colleague, a Mr. Moffatt, who saw fit to accept a position with a company the Ontario Highway Transport Board was ruling against.

He talks about flip-flops; flip-flops from a member of a party that aligns itself with another party to retain power. He should talk about flip-flops.

Mr. Hayes: You are doing it now.

Mr. Gregory: I have not flip-flopped. This party is flexible enough at least to see when the time has come for change and not to be afraid of it. We in the Progressive Conservative Party are not afraid of change, as are my friends in the party of last resort, who are in third place for a good reason. If there were a fourth place, they would be in fourth place.

The member has made some interesting comments, none of which I am sure the minister will pay any attention to if he is as smart as I think he is.

Mr. Philip: I do not sign my name to a report one year and then, four or five years later, say the principles I signed my name to are completely false because my leader in Ottawa, who is now in a very bad third place in the polls, needs to be rescued on a free trade issue. I do not make those kinds of flip-flops and I will not resort to the rhetoric and attacks that the member for Mississauga East did.

I do not want to disturb him. He has chapped lips and his mirror has been very cold today. None the less, I will not resort to that, because he has publicly stated that on Thursday he will be voting for my private member's bill to deregulate animal control and I do not want to irritate the member.

Mr. Gregory: On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker: The member should be obliged to explain the chapped lips and the mirror bit. I do not know what he is talking about.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. That is not a point of privilege.

Mr. Ramsay: It has been a pleasure this afternoon to listen to the speakers talking about trucking reregulation, not deregulation as I have heard it called many times. It is unfortunate that the previous speaker, my colleague the member for Etobicoke, keeps calling it that. It is reregulation and we have been lucky enough to have learned from the American experience of deregulation not to follow in their path. If the

member is familiar with all the regulations, he will see that it does not follow the American example at all but rather learns from its mistakes. We are fortunate to be able to do that.

I have some comments on how this legislation impacts on my region of the province. Commenting again on the previous speaker, I would say that exhuming a report written 10 years ago to defend his position is a bit outdated. We are now in the late 1980s and we have to be looking at a more efficient transportation system, not only for the whole of the province but especially for northern Ontario, my region, which suffers from the lack of transportation facilities.

In many of the speeches I am hearing, the third party seems to be saying that truck transportation is A-okay in northern Ontario. I do not believe that to be so. This is a step in making some changes and members are going to see some benefits from this.

The member for Etobicoke talked about safety and went on to give examples of airline deregulation in the US—

Mr. Callahan: Trucks falling from the skies.

Mr. Ramsay: Yes, 20-wheelers falling from the skies and that sort of thing. If one looks at this legislation, one will see that safety is one of the paramount items it addresses. Not only does one have to prove the roadworthiness of one's company and the ability of staff to drive the equipment; there is also a recording mechanism here, so government will now be able to keep track of the offences that occur at the companies. Licences can be yanked if companies frequently and constantly run into offences. We are going to be able to police our roads much better.

In northern Ontario, where all sorts of lumber trucks and many other vehicles are hauling, safety is paramount. We have a lot of accidents.

Mr. Philip: You do not need deregulation to do that.

Mr. Ramsay: It is not deregulation.

I would not mind commenting on the remarks of the member for Algoma, who talked about turbo-prop aircraft.

Mr. Wildman: I would just as soon you did not comment on anything I say.

Mr. Ramsay: This is a debate and I am free to do so.

There is another antiquated idea that some people in North Bay and Sudbury have, which is that somehow there is prestige to having jet service come into one's town or city. We have to look at more efficient and cost-effective transportation into the north and at frequency of

service. These are the things we are going to be looking for. A Canadian-built Dash-8 aircraft servicing North Bay, Sudbury and Sault Ste. Marie from Toronto is a much more efficient aircraft to use. It adds about 10 minutes on its Sudbury-North Bay flights, but with the frequency of service, that is what a businessman wants: to come into a city and to come out again. That is the type of affordable service we need. I think we are going to see that with the deregulation of the airline industry, but not with trucking.

1720

This is going to give us more jobs in northern Ontario. Trucking firms are going to be able to enter the market and service small local areas much more easily. We are going to get rid of that backhaul problem.

Surely the member for Algoma must admit the backhaul problem is one of the most frustrating events people see in the north. When we see empty trucks going north, that is most upsetting and adds to the cost of our consumer goods in northern Ontario.

We should give this a chance. I think it is going to work. We are going to have safer, more cost-effective transportation in all of Ontario and especially our region.

Mr. Hennessy: I would like to speak on second reading of the act to regulate truck transportation. I wish to commend the minister for looking into the complaints that were existing in northwestern Ontario. I asked him to hold a meeting with truckers. We had large meetings in Dryden and in Thunder Bay and the minister was kind enough to meet with the truckers and me here in Toronto.

Mr. Haggerty: A very accommodating minister.

Mr. Hennessy: Your minister is going to get mad. I am saying good things about him. The member should be quiet for a minute. I know it is difficult.

Mr. Haggerty: That is what I said; a very accommodating minister.

Mr. Hennessy: He gets so many bad things said about him that people do not listen.

Mr. Guindon: There is no need to heckle.

Mr. Hennessy: The member should show the man the courtesy. That is why his wife is glad he got elected; he is here.

We had a meeting with the minister. He was very kind and listened to the problems that exist. This bill may not be perfect, but the idea is that, by having a standing committee and by going to different areas to discuss the problems, maybe to

the city of Thunder Bay, perhaps things can be rectified to the satisfaction of everybody concerned.

I agree the last bill was brought in many years ago. It is about time for a change, because there are more trucks on the road. A lot of things are happening differently today than they did 10 years ago. I support it in principle.

I am pleased to see that a standing committee is going to be struck. By having a standing committee, we have the opportunity of going to different cities and towns, discussing it with the truckers, the people involved in this problem, and bringing in something satisfactory to everybody concerned.

Mr. Wildman: I rise to participate in this debate with mixed feelings, and I say that with sincerity. I will explain why in a moment.

I think of my colleague Fred Young, who worked for so many years in this Legislature on behalf of safety in trucking and to try to deal with the problems, the chaos that has occurred in the past in trucking in this province, with regard to the effects on the small carriers, the small businessmen, the owner-operators, as well as the effects it had for safety on our highways. Fred Young did a tremendous job as spokesperson on trucking affairs and matters in the Legislature for many years. All of us owe him a great debt.

I also participate in this debate feeling a great deal of respect for the minister and for his sincerity in his attempts to deal with concerns. As my colleague the member for Fort William (Mr. Hennessy) mentioned, this minister, in his short term so far, has indicated a willingness to respond to the concerns of members from all over the province and to deal with what he considers legitimate problems raised. I respect him for that.

I regret that on this matter he seems to have become a prisoner of Reaganomics and of Thatcherism. I speak here not simply as a member of this party, which has taken a position with regard to the question of regulation, but as a representative of northern Ontario. Many people from other provinces find it amusing when we from northern Ontario—less so perhaps northwestern Ontario, but certainly northeastern Ontario—refer to our part of the province as the north. Most parts of northern Ontario are far south of most centres in the Prairies, for instance.

For a moment, we should talk about what the north is, what it means and the problems we in northern Ontario experience. It is not so much a geographic location as what is called by economists a hinterland. The difference between the north and south in this province can be the

differences between the transportation and communications networks. In what we refer to as northern Ontario, transportation and communications are no longer a grid. They cease to be a grid and become a couple of long, narrow ribbons stretched across a vast territory, joining together small communities separated by great distances, with a very scattered and sparse population. Obviously, in an area such as that, transportation is of the utmost importance to the people. Just as transportation has been of major importance in the development of this whole country, it still remains of paramount importance to northern Ontario.

Let us look for a moment at the problems we experience in northern Ontario today and how they might relate to this legislation. I may be accused of being repetitive, of being a bit of a broken record because I have been raising this in the House for the past number of months, but it is important for us to recognize that in northern Ontario the recession has not passed. The boom being experienced in southern Ontario, in the Golden Horseshoe or that stretch between Windsor and Oshawa, has not come to northern Ontario. The recession of the early 1980s continues and worsens. We are close to being in a depression in northern Ontario.

We have heard it said in this debate that this legislation will mean more jobs in northern Ontario. If I could believe that I might say we should look at this legislation in a different light, but I honestly and sincerely do not believe that to be the case. The question is will deregulation—not the euphemism of reregulation but deregulation, because that is what this is—help northern Ontario?

We have a problem in northern Ontario that has been referred to by a number of speakers in this House this afternoon; that is, the question of backhauls. We as a party and I as a representative of northern Ontario recognize this is a major problem for shippers and business in northern Ontario as well as for truckers. It does not make a lot of sense for a trucker to be licensed to carry a product or set of products from Thunder Bay to Toronto but not to be licensed to ship other products from Toronto to Thunder Bay. It does not make any sense to anyone for that truck to have to return empty. There is no question that is a serious problem, a problem that adds to the cost of doing business in northern Ontario.

The question is, must we have deregulation, or even what Mulroney likes to call reregulation, to solve that problem? I honestly do not think so. It seems to me in this case, if that is one of the

concerns the government has, it is throwing away the kitchen sink. It is destroying everything. My friend the member for Lake Nipigon says, "They are throwing out the baby with the bath water," and I think that is the case.

1730

We could certainly change the licensing process to deal with the problem of backhaul without getting rid of the licensing process. It does not make any sense for this minister to say to the people of this province and to the people in this House that to deal with that problem we have to destroy the whole system. That is what he is saying to us today. The minister in his presentation said that with this legislation under this system we will now look at fitness rather than test public convenience and necessity.

Mr. Pouliot: Survival of the fittest.

Mr. Wildman: My friend from Nipigon refers to the survival of the fittest. That indeed is the law of the jungle. Prior to the regulation process we have in trucking that is what we had in this province on our highways, the law of the jungle. I fear what this will mean for northern Ontario.

The minister said it is too hard to get a licence and it is time-consuming and costly. I grant him that may be the case; it certainly is the case. I have had experience with trying to assist owner-operators to gain a licence and appearing before the Ontario Highway Transport Board. It does not have to be costly, but it can be time-consuming and inconvenient. We could change those administrative problems without throwing out the system.

Testing fitness is an interesting concept. How can we be assured that a company that can show itself or argue that it is fit to carry on business in a certain area will remain so subsequently? I am not sure how that will be enforced or dealt with and I do not think the legislation is clear.

I was concerned when the minister referred to the fact that this would end the burden of rate filing. That is what we in this party are concerned about. The argument is that this will mean a cut in rates, that we will have less regulation, or deregulation, which will mean lower rates and greater competition with more companies vying for the business available. It has been said by other members of this House that will probably be not of assistance to the small haulers, to the owner-operators, but to the large companies. They will be the ones that will be able to cut their rates significantly, to cut out the small haulers.

That would mean, at least in the short term, a lowering of the costs of doing business in the north and lower costs for shipping goods; but

what will it mean in human terms? What will it mean for the small company that will be forced out of the business? What will it mean in terms of the loss of trucking jobs in northern Ontario? It will mean not more jobs but fewer jobs.

It has been said by a number of members from northern Ontario that we have a great deal of concern for safety in northern Ontario. There is no question about that. If members drove on the kinds of roads we have in the north, with the unfortunate lack of commitment by the government—and I do not mean the minister in this case—to provide the necessary funding to improve the roads in northern Ontario so that they could at least match the secondary highway system in southern Ontario, they would be concerned about safety too.

We have so-called highways in northern Ontario that do not even match the county roads in southern Ontario. We have seen the comments of the road-building contractors about the need for investment by government to bring the roads up to the standard they were at 10 years ago. We have even seen promises by the Liberal Party in the last election campaign, when it said it would cost \$40 million to bring the roads up to the standard they were at a few years ago.

Our roads have always been at a lower standard. I recognize it is harder to build roads in northern Ontario. The topography, the kind of rocky terrain we have, makes it more difficult to build roads in the north. The cold weather, with the severe winters we have, makes it a fact of life that the roads do not last as long once they are built.

However, we have had inadequate funding over the past number of years under the previous government and, unfortunately, it has continued under this government. The estimates for this ministry, actually the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, though the Ministry of Transportation and Communications does the road-building, are cut. They are lower than last year, even with the supplementary estimate.

We are concerned about safety. The minister says this legislation will provide for safety and performance and will ensure that the trucking companies will be responsible and will carry out necessary vehicle maintenance. However, every study that has ever been done about trucking, not only in this province and this country but also throughout North America, has shown that in a deregulated system safety is the first thing that goes by the board. If small haulers are faced with undercutting by the large companies, they have

to cut their rates to stay in business. They cut them so low they have to cut corners to compete.

How do they cut those corners? One of the ways is by staying on the road too long. We have sleepy drivers driving on those unsafe roads in the north. Over the years, we have talked many times in this House about truckers' logs and the need to ensure that truckers do not drive more than a certain number of hours per week. The question is how that would ever be enforced. I would like to find a way to enforce it, but if someone is faced with losing his whole livelihood, even if he is required to keep a log he will fake it.

If the member for Cochrane North were here, he would be able to attest to the fact there are truckers from my riding, from the Sault Ste. Marie area, who haul lumber from the Hearst area to Detroit and Milwaukee. How do they do it? They start off on a Sunday night at about seven. They drive all night to get to Hearst and arrive there between 3 a.m. and 5 a.m., depending on weather conditions. Then they load up and are out of there by 9 a.m. They get back to the Sault that evening, stop for supper and maybe one or two hours of rest, and then drive all night to Detroit. They unload the next morning, drive back to the Sault and head off to Hearst again. They do that three or four times a week. Can you tell me those are safe drivers? That is what is happening now. What is going to happen when this legislation gets through?

If you are driving a passenger automobile on the road between White River and Hornepayne or Hearst, a road I admit the minister is rebuilding—which is certainly needed, because it is a shortcut used by the truckers from Hearst to get either to Sault Ste. Marie and the border into the US or to haul chips from Hearst to Marathon for American Can—that is a very narrow road; as I say, we welcome the fact that the minister is widening it.

1740

If you are driving a passenger automobile on that road, at night particularly, and meet a truck in the middle of the road and he does not move for you—and I suspect some of those drivers are going simply on adrenalin, if not some other substance—you are lucky if you do not get into an accident when you are facing those kinds of trucks and that kind of trucking on that road.

That is the situation today. What is it going to be like when we bring this legislation through? Small truckers, owner-operators, are faced with a tremendous cost. What does a rig cost today; about \$120,000? Those guys have to work night and day to make their payments. If they get

Sunday off they spend it doing repairs and maintenance on their truck. They are going to face cut rates by the big haulers. What are they going to do to stay in business? They are going to stay on the road even longer and they are going to do less maintenance. What kind of corner-cutting are they going to have to indulge in? We may find more haulers, more truckers, burning fuel oil on the road.

It has been suggested in this House that this legislation is good for northern Ontario. I want to know why this government is attempting to destroy the small haulers in this province and in northern Ontario. Honestly, I am very disappointed and surprised that this minister in particular would endanger safety the way I think this legislation is going to do.

There is the other side of the coin. Will it benefit the shippers? I have talked about the backhaul problem. I have said that could and should be dealt with, but it does not have to be dealt with in this manner. In the short term, if rates are cut, it will benefit the shippers. It will cost less to ship the goods, but if it means the small competitors are put out of business and we get the development of a near monopoly by bigger companies, does the minister honestly believe the rates are going to stay low? In the long term, the rates are going to be back up to the level they are at now, if not higher. To paraphrase our friend from Ottawa, we are talking about short-term gain for long-term pain in northern Ontario.

Other members of the House have talked about the effects of deregulation on the airline industry in the US. I am surprised more of them have not talked about the effects of deregulation on trucking in the US. The member for Lake Nipigon mentioned the effects in California. What was it, 100,000 out of work in California? We are talking about more jobs in the north; are we kidding?

Jokes have been made here about my colleague's comments about the deregulation of airlines. I do not think it is a joke to be in an unsafe situation when you are flying in the US. What has happened? A lot of small carriers have developed in the US and have started up businesses in short hauls in the US at lower rates. That is true. You can fly from Buffalo to Florida a lot cheaper than you can from Toronto to Florida. There is no question about that. But in the United States they have also identified serious safety problems. The minister cannot deny that; even the American government does not deny that.

What is happening in Canada because of the federal Conservative government's proposal for deregulation in the airline industry? In preparation for that, even before it is happening, we have seen the two major carriers, through mergers and takeovers, gain monopolies over air traffic in this country such as we have never seen before. Deregulation is supposed to mean more competition. At least this is what was said by the ideologues who put it forward as a good idea. In fact, in Canada proposed deregulation in the airline industry has meant less competition, not more.

Let us look at Sault Ste. Marie, for example. We used to have Air Canada and Nordair serving the long hauls from the Sault. We also had norOntair serving the smaller communities feeding into Sault Ste. Marie. We had Austin Airways, and then Air Ontario came in. Air Ontario came in, anticipating deregulation; so as far as the ideologues are concerned, they say, "That shows we are going to get more competition; more companies are coming in." Air Canada bought up Air Ontario and Austin and then announced it was no longer going to serve Sault Ste. Marie with Air Canada. You do not make a lot of money on those kinds of hauls.

What happened on the other side? Besides purchasing Québecair and Eastern Provincial Airlines, Canadian Pacific Air Lines bought Nordair and was bought out itself by Pacific Western Airlines. Now we are served by Canadian Pacific—we still have jet service, I admit, but it has cut the number of flights—and Air Ontario, which is owned by Air Canada, Austin, which is also owned by Air Canada, and norOntair. Air Ontario has a propeller-driven aircraft. It takes about half an hour more. I will admit that is not very much longer. This is all in the name of deregulation, which is supposed to mean more competition.

We have had jokes made about 18-wheelers or 20-wheelers falling from the sky in response to the remarks my colleague the member for Etobicoke made about air safety. Transportation in northern Ontario is too important to be joked about. What has happened in the airline industry in Sault Ste. Marie presages what is going to happen in trucking in all the smaller communities in northern Ontario. It will be harder to get service. It will be less frequent and more expensive in the long run, and we will be endangering safety.

One may think it will be a good thing to have just the large companies that can afford to cut rates and do the proper maintenance on their

trucks hauling in and out of northern Ontario. I do not think it is. I have too many of my constituents, good, hardworking, honest small businessmen who purchased trucks and who need business, to vote in favour of this legislation.

It is too bad that in the current political situation in this province we do not have—I do not know how to put this delicately; I have a great deal of respect for the member for Cochrane North, but I feel it is unfortunate we do not have more effective spokespeople in the government on behalf of the north. My colleague the member for Etobicoke mentioned Dick Smith. If Dick Smith were still sitting in this Legislature and were on that side of the House, we would not have this kind of legislation. In Dick Smith we had a man who was willing to speak on behalf of northern Ontario and its needs. It did not matter whether it fitted with what his party thought on a particular issue. It is too bad we do not have more people of the calibre of Dick Smith speaking not only on the government side but on all sides of this Legislature.

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Right from the beginning of this country, since before Confederation, people who have known this country recognized the importance of transportation to it. Transportation built Canada, it united this country; but it was not free enterprise transportation that did it, despite what the people at Canadian Pacific might like to tell us. We all know it was government involvement, government land grants and government money grants that built the transportation system in this country. Without continued government involvement and regulation our transportation system is threatened. If you threaten the transportation system, you not only threaten the economy of this country and this province, you also threaten the unity and the very fabric of this country and province.

I regret very much that this legislation was introduced. I regret that this minister is involved with it. I can only hope that he will rethink his position and withdraw the legislation.

Mr. Pouliot: It is with certain emotion that we have been presented with an excellent and very factual address by the member for Algoma regarding the subject matter of Bill 150, Bill 151 and Bill 152. The member reminded us of the cost of doing business, particularly in northern Ontario, the need to address the very real issue of safety and the atrocious and deplorable road conditions. He then went on to remind us of the need to have public regulation. He went on and

on and we began to understand that under the present system, where the minister is concerned about the conditions of the soft shoulders in southern Ontario, we in the second Ontario—we in northern Ontario—are concerned about the section between the soft shoulders.

There are two Ontarios; thank heaven we have had public regulation because it has given us, and not at exorbitant prices, a system that has worked relatively well. It needs to be amended and I beg the minister to reconsider removing the guarantees that have given us a chance to stay alive. My colleague spoke with wisdom; it was almost like gospel. Even as a novice I can commend him with all the sincerity at my command. He was absolutely right on in addressing the needs of northern Ontarians.

Mr. Wildman: I thank my friend the member for Lake Nipigon for his kind comments, but to elevate my remarks to gospel is a bit extreme.

Mr. Callahan: In the brief moments that are left, I want to say I have listened to the debate in the House and it seems to me that most of the debate from the members of the third party seemed to be one of doom and gloom. They appear to have a less than enthusiastic approach to the small businessman of Ontario and the fact that he wishes to compete in the marketplace.

All too significantly in the past, because of the tremendous cost of hiring a fairly high-priced counsel to appear before the Ontario Highway Transport Board to establish through perhaps many days of evidence that it was a matter of necessity that an additional route be opened up for a particular trucker, many of these people were denied access to the market.

The third party has always professed to support the little man. I suggest their entire attitude to this bill demonstrates a total lack of concern about the little man, a total lack of concern about the question of enhancing small business opportunities. There are truckers in Ontario who would dearly love to have an opportunity to open up their own business, to operate either a local venture within a municipality or even on a long-haul basis.

My experience has been that a lot of people who were not capable of obtaining their own public commercial vehicle licence from the transport board because of the cost involved and the lengthy procedure would enslave themselves to a broker. They would enter into various arrangements with a broker who had a PCV licence and arrange to buy a tractor-trailer. If somewhere along the line something happened that perhaps was their fault, or was a mishap and

was no fault of their own, some of these agreements would result in their tractor-trailers being usurped by the brokers.

They were driven to those extremes, not in every case but there were such cases. The entrepreneur, the person who did not have a great deal of wealth, was denied the opportunity of being able to enter into a small business transaction by operating his truck, which was his livelihood and was paid for and eked out of the dollars he was able to save, perhaps from two jobs, to arrive at the funds for that type of unit.

The traditions of the past die slowly. I am pleased that the minister had the foresight and the guts, which are indicative of this government's entire approach to the legislative process, to come forward and say, "History 1920"—when the entire PCV licence procedure was set up to regulate competition with the railway system—"is ancient history." We now have to get on with the real purpose of serving not only the people of northern Ontario but the people of Ontario as a whole by giving business opportunities to small, young entrepreneurs, not denying it to them and allowing only the larger corporations to participate on long-haul routes.

There are a lot of people out there, young people in particular, who are very mechanically inclined, people who enjoy the trucking experience but are not in a position to do it because of the difficult bars set up in the past as a result of the lengthy proceedings before the board. The third party seems to have some difficulty in understanding that people who earn their livelihood by a particular occupation are very cognizant of the concern that if they lose the ability to support their family through that occupation, they are being denied the very source of their existence.

Accordingly, quite contrary to the doom and gloom of the members of the third party, I suggest the secondary or perhaps equal thrust of this bill is to ensure that there is safety on the roads. That becomes particularly significant when one looks at the products being carried by a number of trucking outlets. We hear conversation about items of a dangerous nature being trucked and it becomes important to have the additional safety feature that is provided for in this bill.

I am pleased to support the bill.

On motion by Ms. E. J. Smith, the debate was adjourned.

The House adjourned at 6 p.m.

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Wednesday, January 21, 1987

Speaker: Honourable H. A. Edighoffer
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday, January 21, 1987

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr. Speaker: Before I call for routine proceedings, I must thank the member for Bellwoods (Mr. McClellan) for bringing to my attention that, according to Hansard, I had undertaken to review the transcript of the exchange between the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye) and the member for Sudbury East (Mr. Martel) which took place during question period on December 16, 1986.

I have reviewed the transcript for that day and find that the minister said he had heard "nonsensical so-called facts." The member replied, "You cannot dispute one fact, nor have you tried." The minister then replied, "When they are reviewed, they turn out not to be the facts."

On hearing the point of order of the member for Bellwoods, I first concluded that I had "heard a dispute of facts." After reviewing the transcript, I have confirmed my first impression, and I think it is safe to say that what took place that day was a dispute as to facts and not a valid point of order.

Mr. Martel: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order. That is my ruling.

Mr. Martel: Yes, I understand your ruling, Mr. Speaker, and now I seek your guidance.

Mr. Shymko: Are you challenging the Speaker?

Mr. Martel: I would not challenge my friend the Speaker. I am trying to solicit his assistance with the problem I am having. What is at stake here is that an entire study was done by the government. Every time one gets up and presents facts that are documented, this cavalier approach is presented that it is not a fact.

I told my friend exactly what you were going to say to us today, Mr. Speaker, that you could not decide what is the fact and what is not the fact. There should be an open and public inquiry to find out what the facts really are. They should not be hidden away the way those birds have hidden them.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Will the member for Sudbury East contain himself.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

LAYOFFS

Mr. Brandt: I was informed yesterday that Fiberglas Canada is laying off 160 employees from its plant in Sarnia. This move is going to have a devastating effect on my community. To put it into perspective, it is the equivalent of 5,600 jobs being lost in Metropolitan Toronto, the equivalent to three and a half Goodyear plants closing simultaneously.

This most recent layoff comes after layoffs at the Ethyl Canada plant in Corunna, the Polysar plant and other major employers in my area. The unemployment rate for the county of Lambton has reached 10.2 per cent, and in the city of Sarnia it is much higher.

As part of the stated plan of the Premier (Mr. Peterson) to decentralize government operations as a means to bolster regional economies, he has transferred 650 jobs to Sault Ste. Marie and Sudbury and, most recently, 325 jobs to North Bay. We in Sarnia need the same type of government assistance. We have done what we can do locally to improve our economy, but it is not enough. We need provincial help. Therefore, I urge the Premier today to consider moving a government ministry or a portion of a ministry to Sarnia-Lambton to assist us in the diversification and the restructuring of our local economy.

I have sent a letter to the Premier asking him to meet with a delegation from Sarnia to discuss this vital matter. Thank you very much.

WILD TURKEY HUNT

Mr. Laughren: Some time ago, the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio) announced there would be a wild turkey hunt in the province this spring. There will be two sessions, from May 4 to May 9 and from May 11 to May 16. Attached to his announcement were some tips for being a safe hunter. I know a lot of hunters will not get the sheet that is put out by the minister, so I would like to repeat it now for those who are watching:

"1. Do not stalk wild turkeys. Call them to you. Stalking is almost always unsuccessful and may lead you to another hunter.

"2. Do not call like a gobbler (a male turkey). Another hunter may mistake you for one. Imitate the call of a hen turkey.

"3. Wear total camouflage clothing and camouflage hands and face. Do not wear red, white or blue. These colours may be mistaken for a gobbler's head.

"4. Keep still, and do not make sudden movements. A quick movement could alert the bird to your presence or draw fire from another hunter.

"5. Make absolutely certain your target is a gobbler."

NORTHERN REGIONAL TREATMENT CENTRE

Mr. Gordon: I would like to draw to the attention of the Minister of Correctional Services (Mr. Keyes) the mounting concern in the Sudbury region about the pressure that is being brought to bear by a powerful federal minister to move the Correctional Services northern treatment centre to another location in the north.

The minister knows full well that one of the reasons he made a commitment to the Sudbury region was that it met the criteria as laid down by his ministry. We have the psychiatric services that are necessary and the other ancillary services that would be required for any type of a northern treatment centre. It is well known that the city of Sudbury has put forward some 12 sites and is prepared to make those sites available cost-free for the ministry. It would not have to put up any money.

I remind the minister that more than 9,000 people are currently unemployed in our region. I ask the minister to make an official announcement as soon as possible to end the idle rumour and speculation that is gripping the Sudbury region. It is nonproductive, and I know he would not want to bring this project along with this type of unnecessary rumour. I ask him to act now.

DRUG BENEFITS

Mr. R. F. Johnston: For many years, it has been the tradition that many Canada pension disability recipients have had their federal amounts topped up by family benefits here in Ontario and by a benefit package, including the drug card, for those whose incomes are very inadequate.

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Recently, the federal government recognized how inadequate those federal rates were and increased its rates from a maximum of \$455 to \$635 a month. That amount now exceeds the

amount this province will pay a disabled person on family benefits; that amount is only \$605. This means people who are near or at the maximum of the Canada pension plan who used to receive drug cards will no longer be eligible for those drug cards or the supplementary assistance in Ontario.

I want to know why the ministry, even though I made it aware of this in December, has decided not to move to protect these individuals and how much it is saving and how many people are affected by this policy. Our party suggests to the government that the best policy would be to guarantee that every person on CPP disability in this province be issued a drug card and not be further disabled because of the unfortunate miserliness of this government.

CONTROL OF SMOKING

Mr. Sterling: Today has been dedicated as Weedless Wednesday, the final day of National Nonsmoking Week, when smokers try to break their habit for one day. This effort is supported by all health care agencies in our country. While I commend the attempt to quit this addiction, I must at the same time condemn the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston) and the Liberal government for doing absolutely nothing to help these individuals. There are no ministry-funded programs to assist people to kick the habit; yet tobacco is shortening the lives of our citizens. Today 35 people will die prematurely because of firsthand and secondhand smoke.

I have brought forward Bill 71, which attempts to control smoking in public and in the work place. It may encourage smokers to quit, as smoking areas will be restricted to protect nonsmokers in the work place and public places. This afternoon I will introduce a petition that will include 14,000 more names for Bill 71. No other private member's bill has been supported by as many members of the public as has Bill 71.

This government, for reasons unexplained, chooses to ignore Bill 71. It is being unfair to our children and to future generations of Ontarians. I urge it to call Bill 71 at the earliest possible date.

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

Mr. Warner: Noted writer June Callwood, in commenting on Ken Dryden's report about youth unemployment, says: "The government changed, the economy began to heal, priorities shifted. What had been a high-profile, dramatic initiative born of white-water politics during a period of acute youth unemployment turned into a placid

millpond surrounded by sleepy civil servants making 'ribit' sounds in the twilight."

There were two recommendations made by Mr. Dryden: first, that the Minister of Skills Development (Mr. Sorbara) and other ministers should report to the Premier (Mr. Peterson) within six months with a strategy for full employment and, second, that the same minister should report to the Premier within six months with a strategy for an education-training system.

The minister and the government chose to ignore both of those recommendations and the minister apparently has chosen to sit in the middle of the millpond "making 'ribit' sounds in the twilight."

NOTICE FROM NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY

Mr. Andrewes: I wish to draw the members' attention to a piece of mail received by an 80-year-old senior citizen in my riding. It says:

"Dear Friend:

"What do you want for yourself? For your children? For your province?

"Help turn your concerns into action. Get involved with Ontario's political party that fights for you. The only party that is on your side and puts your interests first—the Ontario New Democratic Party."

The letter goes on at some length. "You can count on the New Democrats to fight for you and your family, to fight for your children's futures.

"Tell me what your priorities are; give us the dollars to do it."

It is signed "Bob Rae, MPP, Leader, Ontario New Democrats." It is addressed to one Christopher Andrewes, Rural Route 3, Beamsville, Ontario, who is of course my father.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Maybe he made a previous donation.

Mr. Rae: Would he rather have had a letter from the National Citizens Coalition?

Mr. Speaker: Order. Statements by the ministry? None? Oral questions, the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Gillies: No statements, no ministers. Where is the Premier (Mr. Peterson)?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Just before the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Grossman) launches himself, I expect the Premier, the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway) and lots of others to be here in a moment.

ORAL QUESTIONS

PAPER MILL

Mr. Grossman: In the presence of only nine ministers of the cabinet, I have a question for the

Treasurer, one of the few who is diligent about attendance in the House. Yesterday, in response to our questions and the media's questions about the Kimberly-Clark situation, the Treasurer said a new trade battle was feared if they decided to assist Kimberly-Clark. Can he substantiate that suggestion this afternoon?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Following the exchange in the House, I was asked by one of the members of the press gallery if that was a matter for consideration. I said it was, that I thought it was of secondary consideration but it was a matter we had to consider. As the honourable member has seen, this was reported as a major matter. I would say it is important, but it is not nearly as major as maintaining employment, maintaining our levels of pollution abatement and seeing that the taxpayers are properly represented in those important aspects.

Mr. Grossman: As the Treasurer seeks to devise reasons for not helping the people in Terrace Bay, once again he has shown the total negligence and sloppiness of his government when it comes to trade issues and international sensitivity on trade issues. Is the Treasurer aware that during the past five years, 10 mills in northern Ontario have received assistance of more than \$125 million from the government of Ontario and the federal government? With all that direct assistance, there is not one single indication from the American government to the Canadian government or to the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology or to any of the Treasurer's own civil servants that the \$125-million program caused one single concern with regard to trade issues and unfair subsidization by the Americans.

Given that record, how could he be so careless as to put up this straw man?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I know the member is correct when he talks about the payments made to the mills, which had nothing to do with pollution abatement per se but were for upgrading the manufacturing process. As far as that goes, I did not raise the matter of any trade difficulties myself, but when asked, I acknowledged that it was something we were concerned about and I can assure him that we are. In the days when the former government was using public funds to upgrade the mills to maintain employment and the capability to compete, these trade problems had not surfaced to the point they have now.

The member may not realize how significant they are, but I can assure him they are and they are matters that have to be taken into consideration.

Mr. Grossman: The Treasurer has misunderstood, shall we say, many points. First, trade issues were a problem during that time. The softwood lumber issue was front and centre in 1983. The then Minister of Natural Resources went to Washington four times to fight it off successfully, which this government has not done. Trade issues were front and centre in 1983.

Second, the Treasurer is simply uninformed and wrong when he says pollution abatement was not part of that program. In point of fact, as the minister responsible for the program, I participated with my colleague the member for Muskoka (Mr. F. S. Miller) in negotiating 10 agreements with 10 companies, about 30 per cent of the funds for which were precisely for pollution abatement. He is totally misinformed in this entire area.

Finally, we checked with the International Trade Commission and found there are no pending applications or questions in the area of pulp and paper.

1350

Mr. Speaker: Question.

Mr. Grossman: Why, in an attempt to find a reason for not helping the people in Terrace Bay, would the Treasurer have been so careless on this sensitive trade issue to raise the totally unjustified scare tactic of US retaliation?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I suggest that the honourable member is imputing motives which are frankly incorrect. It is the furthest thing from my mind to throw up any sort of barrier towards a situation that will achieve the aims we have been talking about in the past two question periods.

We want employment to be maintained and enlarged, and we want the environmental standards that have been established in Ontario substantially maintained and brought into effect. We believe we can do this in the best interests of the development of our resources, maintaining the jobs and strengthening our position vis-à-vis the environment, by following the leadership of our excellent minister in this case, which has been outstanding and in the best interests of all the people.

Mr. Speaker: New question.

Mr. Grossman: The fact is, the Treasurer carelessly throws around trade fears, not understanding that they significantly damage our position in the United States.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. New question. To which minister?

Mr. Grossman: I have a question for the Minister of the Environment, and he has certainly had a lot of time to think of the answers since he has not been here for many days. Has the minister asked the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) for money to assist Kimberly-Clark in the cleanup, and if so, how much?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: Since the Leader of the Opposition raised such a kerfuffle yesterday about whether the Minister of the Environment was present, I think members of this House would want to know that the Minister of the Environment was in Ottawa yesterday, attending an emergency meeting of environment ministers on acid rain and other items. If I had not been in attendance at that meeting, the person who would be standing in this House today demanding why I was not defending Ontario's interests at that meeting would be none other than the Leader of the Opposition.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Does the minister have a response?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I certainly have a response. I hope the response is not too pink for the Leader of the Opposition, who has been referred to in that fashion by some of his former supporters.

I can assure the honourable member who now has an interest in this issue that many discussions have taken place concerning this matter. I have accepted input from a number of areas and encouraged input from other areas. The Treasurer is one of the people in whom I have a good deal of confidence for advice and counsel. He is one person whose opinions I always value on these matters. I assure the Leader of the Opposition that among those I have consulted has been my good friend and longtime member of this House, the Treasurer.

Mr. Grossman: We want to know whether the minister has as much clout with the Treasurer and the Premier (Mr. Peterson) as Abe Schwartz has.

Mr. Speaker: Is that your question?

Mr. Grossman: No; it is not a question. The answer is obvious.

Mr. Speaker: By way of question?

Mr. Grossman: Last September the minister apparently succeeded in getting a commitment from the Treasurer for \$85 million for the smelter cleanup program involving Inco and Falconbridge as well as a couple of other companies, this all in the name of acid rain which he was discussing in Ottawa yesterday. If the minister

was able to get an \$85-million commitment from the Treasurer to fight acid rain and give up to \$85 million to Inco, Falconbridge and some other company, is he prepared to do precisely the same to fight water pollution to save the jobs in Terrace Bay?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I should explain to the honourable member, who may not be aware of this, that this was discussed at the environment ministers' conference at which I was in attendance all day yesterday and into the evening.

Mr. Gillies: Except when the minister opened the courthouse.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I am sorry. I have already said that. That was the meeting I did not attend on Monday because I was in the House to answer questions Monday and the Leader of the Opposition was not here.

Because the Leader of the Opposition follows environmental issues very closely, I know he will be aware that when that issue were discussed with Mr. McMillan some time ago—and it was an excellent meeting with the federal minister—there was a provision that in 1988, when the final report in process was finished, when the smelters came forward—in this case Inco, Falconbridge and the Algoma sintering plant—with their specific plans for meeting the acid rain regulation requirements, if they could justify in a presentation to the federal and provincial governments the need for such funds to be provided at that time, we would provide those funds based on that need and based on a criteria that would be established. We are talking of some time away yet, and some very close justification.

On many occasions over the past few weeks, I have indicated both in this House and outside the House that we have been considering a number of options, such as financial and environmental, to come forward with the best control order that we believe is necessary to clean up the environment in the area.

Mr. Grossman: The fact is that the minister has a commitment. He announced it, as he is very good at doing. I want to quote what he said on August 3: "We are putting our money where our mouth is in the battle against acid rain." That was his statement after he received a commitment from his Treasurer to provide up to \$85 million to fight acid rain and to assist those large companies in cleaning up their operations. Has the minister been able to get an equivalent commitment to date from his Treasurer that the money will be available if the appropriate circumstances are met at Kimberly-Clark? Does he have the commitment or not?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: The Leader of the Opposition has pointed out on many occasions that he has had the opportunity to sit on this side of the House for a number of years. Being involved in cabinet discussions, he would know that cabinet discussions are confidential, except in a general sense. The member would know that this was a program, to show the difference between the two, and that the federal government had put forward, as part of its program, a \$150-million program to be matched by the provinces for the purposes of meeting acid rain commitments.

I have explained in great detail to the Leader of the Opposition, who has suddenly become interested in environmental issues. Apparently, they are no longer yuppie issues just for the Toronto people, as he said when he was in Sarnia. They are now issues that mean something else.

Mr. Davis: What the minister means is that he cannot get any money out of the Treasurer. He cannot get any money for education, and he cannot get any money for the environment.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I will ask only that the members of the House evaluate that when they see the—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Interjections are out of order.

Mr. Rae: My question is of the Premier. Can he explain the events of the past 10 days with respect to the Kimberly-Clark mill? First, can he explain why a meeting was announced in Terrace Bay to announce a control order on Wednesday? That meeting was then summarily and suddenly cancelled. Can he explain why the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) was mysteriously and suddenly taken off the case? He disappeared from the House for two days last week, and the Premier then set up a subcommittee of deputy ministers to deal with the issue, rather than the Minister of the Environment.

Can the Premier explain precisely what has happened and why, as of today, the workers in Terrace Bay and Longlac still do not know what is going on and what the position of the government is with respect to their jobs and with respect to the end of pollution from the Kimberly-Clark mill?

1400

Hon. Mr. Peterson: The honourable member may be confused. I do not think anyone else is confused here. The minister is firmly in charge of the situation. There is no question about that. We have a difficult situation on which the govern-

ment has undertaken negotiation. I cannot enlighten the member any further in that regard.

Discussions are ongoing at a multiplicity of levels. The member knows the difficulty. We have a serious environmental question. We also have a serious problem with respect to the down-sizing of that mill, and we are anxious to protect the jobs and to clean up the pollution. We are working on both problems, and it should not be that difficult to understand it.

Mr. Rae: The reason it is difficult to understand, in terms of the basic ability of the government to deal with a very real problem, is that the control order expired in October 1986. It did not expire by surprise or overnight. It was in place for five years, and it was due to expire. We are now in a situation where the government has had to delay, has had to extend, has sent conflicting signals; the bureaucracy was originally contradicted by the minister and then the minister was contradicted in turn by his deputy minister and by the Premier. That is precisely what has happened.

Can the Premier tell us why has there been this kind of confusion, this kind of mismanagement and this kind of bungling of a basic issue and a basic problem? The government should have known about it for years. It should have been settled well before the expiry of the control order back in October. Why has that not been done?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: As the member usually responds, some of these things should have been solved before. He may be right, he may be wrong; but this is a complicated situation. I think the confusion in this matter comes from the advice he is getting from the honourable member who represents that area, who has been on both sides of this issue all along the way. Or perhaps the member is listening to CBC Radio in the morning; perhaps that is the source of his confusion in this whole matter.

The minister is actively in control of this situation. He is working on it. There are ongoing discussions. It is difficult; I am sure the member for York South (Mr. Rae) is the first to recognize that. We hope to have a solution in the not-too-distant future. I am not in the position, and neither is the minister, to tell him the solution to that problem today, but I am familiar, as is the member, with the history of KC and the problems in that area and the jobs that are at stake, as well as the very important commitment this government has to eliminating the pollution.

That minister and this government do not have to stand up and apologize for our stand on the

environment, because we are the leading jurisdiction in North America today.

Mr. Rae: The member for Lake Nipigon (Mr. Pouliot) and the member for Lakeshore (Mrs. Grier) have spoken with clarity and force on this issue. If there is one thing the workers and even the management at Kimberly-Clark know, it is that if there is one member in this House who has returned every phone call, who has been at every single meeting, who has met with every level of that company, it is the member for Lake Nipigon. The Premier should be ashamed of himself for making the kind of statement that he made. That is more than the Premier has done. He is ill one day, and he turns up skating on the Rideau Canal the next day. It is a miraculous transformation.

When is the order going to be made public, and can the Premier give us an assurance, as I asked the Treasurer yesterday and still have not had an answer: is the order is going to have a definite time frame attached to it, and is it going to guarantee the jobs of the workers involved at Kimberly-Clark?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: Generally, control orders do not have guarantees of jobs in them, to the best of my knowledge. The member wants it both ways. He is standing up in the House and saying he wants all the jobs and he wants to end up with control of the pollution. We do too, and we are working on the situation. The member admits it is a complex issue, as we do, and we are working on the issue.

When it is done, we will make it public and happily share it with him. We will share all the results of what we do. I cannot tell him the date, and I cannot tell him exactly what will be in that control order. I can tell him it is being discussed. We are very serious about the situation, and as soon as we have the answer we will be very happy to share it with him.

Mr. Rae: The minister has been cut off at the knees almost as badly as in any case we have seen in the House.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr. Rae: I have a question for the Minister of Financial Institutions concerning the decision of the Divisional Court of Ontario with respect to the case of young Michael Bates. I am sure the minister is aware of the case and has read the judgement of the court.

Can the minister tell us whether he feels a trifle uncomfortable that one of the arguments used by the court in arriving at its decision that the classification structure used by the insurance companies is reasonable was, first, that the

classification system was approved by the superintendent of insurance and, second, that the superintendent of insurance, who is responsible for the rates charged drivers insured by the Facility Association, uses the same system with respect to discrimination on the grounds of age, sex and marital status?

Mr. Speaker: The question is?

Mr. Rae: Does the minister not agree that he cut off the Ontario Human Rights Commission case at the knees precisely because his own superintendent of insurance was involved in the same kind of discriminatory classification?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I do not agree with that at all. We have a situation, as I am sure the leader of the third party knows, where it is only drivers under 25, single and male, who are affected by that classification. Once they are over 25, there is no discrimination based on their age, sex or marital status. This young man felt his human rights were being violated. He went to the courts and the courts said no, his human rights were not being violated. Notwithstanding that, we are still addressing that problem.

Mr. Rae: I think the minister has misread the decision. What the court said was that the exceptions provided for in the Human Rights Code could be used by the companies as justification.

Does the minister think it is fair and reasonable that a young driver such as Michael Bates, who now is 24—at the time he brought the case he was 20 years old—with a clear record, no accidents, should be paying two, three, four and five times as much as somebody else simply because he is younger, male and single? Does the minister think that is fair and right in Ontario in 1987?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I do not. As a matter of fact, I have instructed the insurance industry to start compiling actuarial data, as of January 1, 1985, based on driving experience and driving records. They anticipate it will take up to three years to get that statistical base. Once we have it, we will implement a rating system based on that.

Mr. Swart: His assistant says it will take three more years in addition to the two years already. Why does the minister need that kind of a wait? He must realize that Manitoba, Saskatchewan and British Columbia, under their successfully operated, driver-owned, public nonprofit insurance plans have applied the same rates for good young male drivers as drivers of any age and done that over many decades. In spite of that, they have rates for adult drivers which are 20 per

cent on the average below what the people are paying in this province.

Mr. Speaker: And the question is?

Mr. Swart: Given that the Supreme Court said about this system that there may be doubts that the current system need be continued but it is the only game in town, does the minister not think it is time we had a new game here such as the plans of the western provinces and stop the ripoff of young drivers and everybody else?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I am sure the member for Welland-Thorold (Mr. Swart) will be delighted to hear that the recent report of the Manitoba insurance industry shows a loss this year in excess of \$10 million. I should also say about that \$10 million that there are only 600,000 drivers in all of Manitoba. In Ontario, we have in excess of six million. If we use the same figure, if we had a system like Manitoba's the people of Ontario would have lost in excess of \$100 million this year.

1410

TECHNOLOGY FUND

Mr. Pope: My question is for the Treasurer. I think he owes this House an explanation. I refer him to page 23 of the Instant Hansard of yesterday. When my colleague the member for Brantford (Mr. Gillies) asked a question about the status of the Exploracom grant, the Treasurer stood in his place and said the following, "The public financing for Exploracom will depend upon the ability of Exploracom to raise the funds necessary to match and guarantee the continuing funding of the program in the future, but that matter is under review."

Given that he admitted outside the Legislature yesterday that a decision had been made a week ago to cut bait and run on yet another mismanaged, ill-conceived Liberal Party fiasco, can he explain his disgraceful conduct in that answer in the Legislature yesterday?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Obviously, I do not like the honourable member's adjectives and reject them out of hand. The member must be aware that the matter was being determined while the questions were being asked yesterday. I would have hoped I could have said at that time that Exploracom had been informed the government was not going forward with financing of the program, for reasons that had been made clear, actually, in the exchange of questions with the member for Brantford.

His questions indicated he was aware at that stage, as were we, that the principal computer

firms were not going to be participating, and that in fact the concept of no further funding for Exploracom beyond the original investment—the idea that it was not going to be possible and that it appeared to me as Treasurer that additional funding would be required. The letter had not gone at that time. The letter has gone and presumably has been received by Exploracom now.

My last statement to the member for Brantford in answer to his question was that no money would be proceeding under those circumstances. There was nothing misleading. I can assure the member there was no intention to mislead.

Mr. Pope: The regrettable consequences of this whole matter are that the Treasurer has been drawn, I think unfortunately and unfairly, into the whole atmosphere of disinformation that surrounded Wyda and Graham Software and that we saw with respect to Exploracom. The Treasurer knows full well that he was aware, by the time the member for Brantford placed the supplementary with enough specifics—he hesitated before his first answer yesterday—that we were aware that the employees had already been told the project was not going ahead. It was only then in answer to the supplementary question that he fessed up and said it was not going ahead.

I want to know why, and I think the members of this Legislature deserve an explanation for the fact that, between the main question and the supplementary question, the Treasurer changed the information he was prepared to give to the Legislature and amplified it even further outside the Legislature when he said the decision had been made a week ago.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The member for Brantford and even the honourable member who is questioning now had every and ample opportunity to ask additional questions about the matter. The information I provided to the member for Brantford was that no money was going to be flowed; none was and none will be under those circumstances. The press gallery outside very properly picked up on the question that had been asked and in particular picked up on its answer, which seemed to leave the opposition members sound asleep, as the member for Cochrane South (Mr. Pope) is when he is here. They picked up on it and had me respond more fully about the fact I had already given to the House, that the matter was under discussion. The letter had not gone to Exploracom at that time.

The hesitation the member noticed was an appropriate one because the letter had not gone and I felt it unfair to bring forward that

information before Exploracom had been properly informed of the decision of the government.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr. Swart: I have a question of the Minister of Financial Institutions. He has imbibed on the insurance companies' rhetoric for so long that he has no idea what the facts are with regard to public auto insurance. He ought to know they made \$70 million during the past five years. Last year they lost \$10 million. They have had a net gain of \$60 million, according to the auditor for the province, during the past six years. Rate increases during that time have gone up by only 18 per cent in total.

I would like to bring to the minister the case of Direct Towing. Tony Salamone of Sherman Avenue North, Hamilton, owns Direct Towing, which has had its insurance rate for five trucks go up from \$7,000 in 1985 to \$12,000 in 1986 and to \$37,000 in January 1987, even though it has had only four claims, averaging \$1,700, during the five years it has been in operation.

Given that the property and casualty insurance companies had higher profits in 1986 than ever before, does the minister not think it is time to intervene and prevent those kinds of increases? What does he propose to do to deal with this kind of gouging by the insurance companies?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The member for Welland-Thorold is coming up with the patent question he keeps asking almost daily, certainly weekly, which is exactly the same issue. We are looking into that area. We have a great many people working on the problem. We will resolve the problem those people are having.

Mr. Swart: That is only one of the tens of thousands of problems being brought to the attention of the Ministry of Financial Institutions.

Mr. Speaker: Final supplementary.

Mr. Swart: Our staff have repeatedly tried to get through on the ministry's insurance line without success. When they did get through and said they wanted to launch a complaint, it was explained that as many as 600 others a day were doing the same thing. Another call to another receptionist produced the figure of 350. Does the minister not realize his private system has broken down, that Band-Aids are no good, that people are being hurt badly and there is urgency? We need a public system like Manitoba's. They have fewer complaints in one year than the ministry gets in one day.

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I would like to repeat one statement I made earlier. Before I commit this

government and the people of Ontario to a cost factor that will be far in excess of \$100 million, I want to make sure that we examine it, that it is the best system for the people of Ontario and that it will serve their needs. Unless we can do that, we are not going to proceed.

TECHNOLOGY FUND

Mr. Gillies: I have a question for the author of the Exploracom mess, the Premier. I would like to ask the Premier about the comments the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) made yesterday to reporters outside the House when he said the government had decided, after external reviews, that the Exploracom project would have a private financing problem, that the revenue projections of Exploracom were not realistic and that the government believed that, once operating, the project would not be able to sustain itself without further injections of government money.

In view of all those facts, can the Premier please clear up the mystery and tell this House why on earth he made a public commitment of \$17.5 million to this project almost a year ago when every study undertaken by the ministry since has shown it is not viable?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: It could very well have been viable. It was an excellent concept and, in my opinion, still remains an excellent concept. The issue was that the financing was not forthcoming. Surely that is not difficult to understand. The commitment was made in principle, depending on certain things happening. Unfortunately, those things did not happen, and we made a decision in the circumstances. How can the member argue for any other prudent course of action?

1420

Mr. Gillies: Does the Premier not realize that by precipitately making this commitment to the project—without proper scrutiny, in my belief—and by now withdrawing support for the project, he has certainly put the province in a position to be sued? I wonder whether the Premier could share with the House what legal advice he has sought on this matter and concerning press reports this morning that Mr. Schwartz and/or his employees may sue the province? Are the taxpayers of this province going to end up liable for those expenditures already undertaken by Exploracom?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I cannot predict the future with clarity. I do not know what is going to happen in the circumstances. There will be a variety of people with a variety of different views with respect to their own interests.

We had a look at this situation in what we considered to be the best interests of the taxpayers. I regret very much what has happened, because I think that in the proper circumstances it would have been a good project for the community. However, as the member may or may not know, occasionally in government one has to make difficult decisions. We are prepared to make those decisions, and I think we have done the appropriate thing.

PAPER MILL

Mrs. Grier: In his reply to the member for York South (Mr. Rae), when he was being questioned about Kimberly-Clark, the Premier seemed to make something of the fact that he would happily make public the control order when it was decided upon. I should hope so. Control orders are public documents.

Last October the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) issued a press release announcing the extension of the control order and saying this extension would permit an accounting firm hired by the ministry to complete a financial audit of the company. I would like to know whether the Premier will be as happy to release the audit that was done at Kimberly-Clark.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: It would be more helpful if I referred the question to the Minister of the Environment so that the member can engage in one of her daily conversations.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I am always happy to answer the questions of my friend the member for Lakeshore.

As she will know, in a very significant way, much of the material that was contained in a general sense in what was actually a financial analysis done by a forensic auditor, to use the correct terminology, has been made public. It has revealed that the company has lost, on the operation in Terrace Bay at least, a significant amount of money; on the Canadian scene, it is in a profit position; and on the international scene, it is in a profit position. It is valuable that this information has come forward.

The member may or may not agree with this, but there may be some very specific information in it that is of a proprietary nature that might not be revealed, but I do not have a problem with that in terms of my own personal assessment of it. As well, it is something the company may or may not wish to reveal in terms of all the intricacies of the audit itself; but certainly in a very general sense I can confirm for the member that the information that has been flowing publicly is accurate.

Mrs. Grier: It is very nice of the minister to confirm that the information is accurate. Quite frankly, I would like to have a look at the information for myself. Having received a press release from the minister in October that he was going to do an audit, all members of this House can be forgiven for assuming this audit was also going to be public.

Will the minister confirm that one of the conditions upon which the audit was done was a condition by the company that it not be made public? How can he justify issuing a press release to say he is doing a public audit if it is not a public audit?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I wish I had the press release in front of me. The member could show it to me.

She is going to send the press release over. This may take a minute, Mr. Speaker. I would like to review it, because I know the member is not one who would ever present inaccurate information in this House. I have never found that to be the case, but I would just like to have an opportunity to read that.

Mr. Speaker: Perhaps the minister would respond.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: Yes, I can comply.

It says: "After the completion of the audit, expected at the end of November, the ministry will decide on the type and scope of environmental requirements that are appropriate... Those requirements will be determined with full public participation."

I do not think it says there is a public audit. It says, "Those requirements will be determined with full public participation." It has been very helpful information. I know the member was not trying to suggest anything aside. I trust her in that regard to the utmost.

Mr. Foulds: More than we can trust the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I trust everyone in this House, even the member for Port Arthur.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

ONTARIO ADVISORY COUNCIL ON SENIOR CITIZENS

Mr. Callahan: There are a number of our senior citizens in the west gallery. It brought to my attention the number of excellent senior citizens' clubs we have in Brampton.

I would like to ask the Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs whether the advisory councils are ongoing and

whether there will be additions or updates of the previous reports that were prepared for seniors.

Mr. Ashe: Another dumb question.

Mr. Rowe: It is a barn burner. Be careful.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The honourable members are wasting a considerable amount of time.

Hon. Mr. Van Horne: Now that we have the attention of the members opposite, I am delighted to respond to the member for Brampton that the Ontario Advisory Council on Senior Citizens, which has been in existence for about a dozen years, will go through the sunset process.

My personal recommendation to the Premier will be that the advisory council continue to exist, because it provides to the government, through me, very good information and advice on a variety of timely themes for seniors.

Mr. Brandt: Here it comes.

Mr. Callahan: It appears the opposition is not interested in hearing anything about seniors.

I would like to indicate that in Brampton, I am advised by a seniors' club, the New Horizons Club, a considerable number of the seniors of this province are located in northern Ontario. I would like to inquire whether the advisory council has visited there and what the results have been, if it has.

Hon. Mr. Van Horne: Prior to the calendar year 1986, it was not the practice of the advisory council to travel extensively; rather, most of the meetings it held were here in Toronto. I should point out that the membership of the committee is province-wide and we have representation from northern, eastern and southwestern Ontario and also from the Metro area.

However, during this past year, I determined it would be wise to see them travel a bit, for the simple reason that I had assigned them a series of tasks. For example, I wanted them to investigate transportation needs for seniors. I wanted to have them report to me on ways of assisting people who might have an Alzheimer's patient within their family. I wanted them to report on the theme of elder abuse.

We did reach out a bit, and this past year the council travelled to the Kitchener-Waterloo region and to the Kirkland Lake region about four months ago.

TECHNOLOGY FUND

Mr. Gillies: My question is to the Premier about the Premier's Council. Since its much ballyhooed announcement last year, the technology council has made one premature major announcement, Exploracom, which has since

self-destructed, has made one \$100,000 grant to a university and has incurred administrative expenses in excess of \$100,000. As far as we can tell, this is the sum total of the activity of this council.

On top of all this, will the Premier now confirm to the House that a consulting contract valued at more than \$500,000 has been awarded to the Canada Consulting Group and to an American company called Telesis to give him some idea of what to do with his technology council?

1430

Hon. Mr. Peterson: That is not accurate at all. The honourable member is correct that there are tendered contracts to Telesis, which he knows is a Canadian arm, and to Canada Consulting Group, which is doing a strategic overview of the entire economy of Ontario.

Mr. Grossman: The Premier should have done that before he announced it.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: If the honourable member thinks these things are already there, they are not. It is interesting that the people participating on the council are very excited about the prospects and the things that are happening.

We have invited representations for the centres of excellence. There is a great deal of activity among the universities as well as in other areas. It is on track, going extremely well and doing exactly what we wanted to do in assisting the government in its policy-making endeavours and in looking at our strategic opportunities over the long term. I know the member thinks in short-term time frames; this is a 10-year commitment to do something that we think is important with respect to the economy of Ontario.

Mr. Gillies: All of us in this House share a concern about the technological development of our province. It is the Premier's singular lack of success thus far in this area that has us concerned. Will the Premier inform the House why, when his colleague the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr. O'Neil) made his statement on December 18 updating the members of this House on the progress of the council, he made no mention of a \$500,000 consulting contract?

Would the Premier further tell the House why, in response to a question in Orders and Notices by the member for Etobicoke (Mr. Philip) asking about contracts going to Canada Consulting Group, his government again gave no information about this \$500,000 contract? With the very high-calibre, blue-chip people whom he has put on this council, why on earth is there not enough

brainpower there to tell him what to do with it, and why does he have to put out a consulting contract of this magnitude?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: My friend would like to burrow around and throw up something in the air which he hopes will stick somewhere or other, or make some accusations. However, it is absolutely on track. I can tell the member what is happening in other countries of the world and what structural realignments they have made to assist the government in their directions and the economy.

Canada Consulting Group has been working for this government and for other governments for a very long time. Many contracts were signed with the previous government. It was a tendered contract, as he knows. If he looks at it, he will find everything in order. His suggestion that there is something untoward, the aroma that stands up every time he stands up, is completely wrong. I think he will find everything in order, working exactly on track.

I am quite excited about the prospects, as are the members of the council. We said at the beginning that it is a long-term commitment to seek our competitive advantages in this economy, to bolster those areas of strength that we have and to try to think ahead, not backwards. If the member canvasses the individual members of the council, he will find that they are extremely excited about the prospects for it. We will be happy to report to the member along the way, as things happen. I warned him then, and I will say again, not to expect instant results. This thing will take a long time.

NORTHERN REGIONAL TREATMENT CENTRE

Mr. Martel: I have a question of the Minister of Correctional Services, if we can get his attention. Since the regional municipality of Sudbury and Sudbury itself have offered free land, if need be, the Sudbury Algoma Hospital has the psychiatric services available, the university has social workers available who need jobs and there are 9,000 people unemployed in Sudbury, can the Minister of Correctional Services tell me why, after almost a year of negotiations and a number of announcements about the possibility of a northern treatment centre, he cannot definitively say today that the facility will be going ahead in Sudbury in the next couple of months?

Hon. Mr. Keyes: I think the honourable member will realize it is not wise to make announcements until we have the full benefit of

reports done by the staff we hire for these purposes. A study is being done by our staff and a report which will review all the issues regarding the site has been promised to me by the end of January. As the member knows, we have been exploring 12 sites in Sudbury for such a facility, and we expect that report at the end of January. I have made a public commitment that we should be able to announce the location of our site by mid-February.

Mr. Laughren: Is the minister telling us it is a certainty that the treatment facility will be located in the Sudbury basin and not in some other community in northern Ontario? Would he tell us why he has not made the announcement with absolute certainty so that a determination of the site can be arrived at, since a municipality in my constituency, Rayside-Balfour, has a site that is available?

The member for Sudbury East (Mr. Martel) has reminded the minister several times that the former radar base near Falconbridge is available. Why can we not have an announcement immediately?

Hon. Mr. Keyes: An announcement by mid-February is within an appropriate time frame. We were prepared to locate and announce it in June, and the residents of the area totally opposed it. The opposition to the current site we are looking at that was voiced in yesterday's Sudbury Star does not help the negotiations as we attempt to locate the site.

Mr. Martel: That is why we told you to use the radar base. There was no problem. It would cost one buck.

Mr. Speaker: New question. No further supplementaries from the member for Sudbury East.

ACID RAIN

Mr. McGuigan: My question is for the Minister of the Environment. Today the Prime Minister of Canada is entertaining a group from the United States that includes Vice-President George Bush. We understand the question of acid rain will be one of the subjects. Yesterday the minister attended a meeting in Ottawa at which other environment ministers were present. Can he tell us what went on at his meeting that would strengthen the hand of Canada in dealing with this subject?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: A number of issues were discussed at the meeting in Ottawa yesterday, and one of the important ones was acid rain. It is my view that the meeting was very productive.

The people involved in the meeting were resolved to see that a full program was in effect in Canada, which would strengthen our hand. I know the federal Minister of the Environment is resolved that this be the case and, along with the provincial ministers, is working hard towards that.

In Canada we have a commitment to a 50 per cent reduction in acid rain in eastern Canada. Ontario has played its part by its regulation, reducing by 67 per cent the amount of sulphur dioxide contamination that would be allowed, 60 per cent overall in Ontario.

The Canadian position that can be brought to the attention of our American friends is a relatively strong one, which will be very helpful in negotiations with Mr. Bush or whoever else might be in that delegation.

Mr. McGuigan: A poll released today said that the number one problem on the minds of Canadians in relation to government is the matter of the environment. Would the minister agree that there is a growing opinion in Canada, and in Ontario in particular, that we have to get tough with the US and perhaps take this to the highest court in the land?

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

1440

Hon. Mr. Bradley: There are two approaches that could be taken in dealing with the American authorities in this regard. The initial reaction to the summit last year was, I think, cautious optimism that some progress might be made. It is my view that on that occasion the Prime Minister attempted to elicit from the President of the United States a commitment to do something constructive about the acid rain problem. The unfortunate thing, in my opinion, is that the US did not live up to its commitment to the Prime Minister of Canada, who had placed this as the number one item on the agenda.

I know that on recent occasions the federal Minister of the Environment mentioned he was extremely disappointed with the progress as far as the administration was concerned. I certainly support the position the federal minister has taken at this time, that having given the American administration a chance, they take a much tougher stance.

CONTROL OF SMOKING

Mr. Sterling: I have a question of the Premier. I wish he would get tough with the environment. What is the government's policy

with regard to controlling tobacco smoke in the work place and in public places? Does the Premier have any position on that at all? Is he in favour of doing that?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: As a reformed smoker, I look askance at anybody who smokes now; I cannot understand why anybody would do that. I think the minister announced some of the initiatives the government is undertaking. We are looking at it in its broad range. I am not in a position to share any more information with the honourable member today.

Mr. Sterling: On a number of occasions I have attempted to obtain from ministers their objection to Bill 71, the Non-Smokers' Protection Act, a private member's bill I have put forward to this Legislature. To date, none of the ministers—the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye), the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston), the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley), the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr. O'Neil)—has objected to Bill 71 at all.

Thirty-five people will die today prematurely because of firsthand and secondhand smoke. Is the Premier's only reason for not calling this bill for third reading, which would take all of 20 minutes of the time of this Legislature, purely a partisan political reason? As Premier, does he not think he should take a leadership role on this issue?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I do not interpret it that way at all. I remind the honourable member that this government has called opposition bills on several occasions. I do not recall that ever being done when the member was part of the administration. Perhaps I am wrong.

Mr. Pope: It was.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: It was done once? It was obviously before my time; I do not recall it. That is not the objection; it is not a partisan political concern. I am sure the member's concerns reach members of all parties. It is a serious issue. The question is, what is the best way to attack and approach it, given all the various rights at stake?

LIQUOR LICENCE

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I have a question for the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations. Can the minister update the Legislature on the investigation into the acquiring of the liquor licence at a bar in Windsor called the Million Dollar Saloon? It has the obvious, direct involvement of a gentleman by the name of Anthony McCowan, who was convicted in October 1977 of keeping a common bawdyhouse

and who was convicted in January 1977 of trafficking in narcotics and sentenced to two years? How is it that an individual who has a criminal record such as this is allowed to get a liquor licence in Ontario and expand the strip bars, which are already a major problem in the city of Windsor?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: From the information I have, I think it was the gentleman's sister who actually applied for the licence. Having said that, the circumstances have been brought to my attention, and I have instructed the Liquor Licence Board of Ontario to make a full inquiry into that situation. The chairman has indicated to me that under his mandate he does not have the power to go into some of these things as far as he would like to; we are going to look at that as well.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: How can the minister say that Mr. McCowan does not have direct involvement in the ownership of this bar? All the loans for the \$700,000 to purchase have been guaranteed by him and the renovations of the bar are being paid for by him. How can the minister possibly say or believe that Mr. McCowan does not have direct involvement in this facility? Will he intervene directly to make sure this gentleman is not allowed to open up yet another strip bar in the city of Windsor?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I did not say he did not have an involvement. I said he was not the nominal applicant for the licence. Having found out that there is a potential involvement, and his involvement in it, we are looking into that. We have a situation where I have stated publicly that we are going to look into it.

I have directed the chairman of the Liquor Licence Board of Ontario to look into the matter. He has indicated to me that he may have some problems under his mandate. If that is the case, then I think his mandate should be changed. We have an obligation to ensure for the people of Ontario that the people who get liquor licences are beyond reproach, are of good character and will serve the public well. That is something we are looking into.

GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENT

Mr. Warner: On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker: A government policy announcement of a \$45-million program was made today. As the critic, I was not given the opportunity to respond in the House to that announcement. That may be because, to quote the Minister of Skills Development (Mr. Sorbara), "the most appropriate place to announce such a program was at the chamber of commerce" rather than in the assembly. Mr.

Speaker, can you find some way to give opposition members their rightful opportunity to offer their views of government policy?

Mr. Speaker: I listened very carefully to the comments by the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere. It is not up to the Speaker to inform anyone or to make any comment in this House; it is to try to control some of the comments in this House. This is not a point of privilege. That matter has been brought before me and other Speakers. It has often been suggested by Speakers that it is common courtesy to inform the House before the public is informed. However, it is not up to the Speaker to make that decision. I thank you for bringing it to my attention.

PETITIONS

NONSMOKERS' PROTECTION LEGISLATION

Mr. Sterling: I wish to table a petition which reads as follows:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, support Bill 71, the Non-Smokers' Protection Act, and ask all members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to vote for it in committee and on third reading in the Legislature.

"We urge the government to support this bill by allowing it to pass through all stages of parliament."

This petition is signed by more than 14,000 people and makes to date the sum of about 22,000 people who have signed a petition in favour of Bill 71.

ANIMALS FOR RESEARCH

Mr. Philip: I want to present a petition signed by 10,291 residents of Ontario as follows:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Each year, under the Animals for Research Act, approximately 4,000 unclaimed dogs and cats are released by impounding agencies to research facilities. These pets can be used in any form of teaching, testing and experimentation. Research facilities are exempted from the provisions of the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act.

"Many municipalities and animal welfare organizations believe that animal pounds/shelters should operate as sanctuaries for lost and abandoned pets and are, therefore, opposed to the sections of the act requiring pounds/shelters to surrender pets.

"Therefore, we the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario to pass into law a bill introduced by Ed Philip, MPP, Etobicoke, entitled An Act to amend the Animals for Research Act, inasmuch as this bill allows municipalities to decide whether or not to surrender unclaimed pets to research."

There are 10,291 signatures on this petition.

SUNDAY TRADING

Mr. Rowe: I have a petition that reads as follows:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario; we, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"We believe in keeping Sunday as a holy day in order that all people grow in holiness—that is wholeness. For this they need regular time for rest and recreation together. Therefore we are opposed to Sunday openings."

It is signed by 60 residents of the city of Barrie.

I also have a second petition on this subject: The wording is the same. It is signed by 63 residents from the riding of Simcoe Centre.

Mr. Speaker: I am wondering whether all the conversations are necessary.

1450

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

Mr. Brandt from the standing committee on administration of justice reported the following resolution:

That supply in the following amounts and to defray the expenses of the Ministry of Correctional Services be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1987:

Ministry	administration	program,
\$13,308,700;	operations	program,
\$237,200,500.		

STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. R. F. Johnston from the standing committee on social development reported the following resolution:

That supply in the following amounts and to defray the expenses of the Ministry of Health be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1987:

Ministry	administration	program,
\$67,134,400;	institutional health	program,
\$4,127,017,000;	emergency health services	laboratories and drug benefit
		program,

\$443,998,500; mental health program, \$362,799,100; community and public health program, \$522,678,100; health insurance program \$2,484,827,000.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

MIGRAINE FOUNDATION ACT

Mr. Grossman moved first reading of Bill Pr61, An Act to revive the Migraine Foundation.

Motion agreed to.

TOWN OF WASAGA BEACH ACT

Mr. McCague moved first reading of Bill Pr64, An Act respecting the Town of Wasaga Beach.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Before I call order 20, there was some misunderstanding about whether we were going to proceed with these bills. I apologize for that, in so far as I am responsible, which I think is 100 per cent.

I am glad we can proceed with the bills of the Ministry of Transportation and Communications. There is some thought, unbelievable though this is, that there might be a division. If so, by agreement, we will postpone those until 5:45 p.m. Since this involves three second readings, there is a certain awkwardness that I am sure the clerks at the table will assist us with.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TRUCK TRANSPORTATION ACT

(continued)

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for second reading of Bill 150, An Act to regulate Truck Transportation.

Mr. Speaker: I believe the member for London South (Ms. E. J. Smith) adjourned the debate. Do any other members wish to participate? The member for Cornwall.

Mr. Philip: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: The procedure after a speech by every member is that other members may respond or ask questions. The member for Brampton (Mr. Callahan) had concluded his remarks. Some of us found his speech so absolutely fascinating and interesting that we wanted an opportunity to question him on some of his words of wisdom. I would like to ask those questions, even if he is not present, so that he may at least have an opportunity to reply.

Mr. Speaker: As you know, we are on provisional standing orders and we have never run into anything similar to this on previous

occasions. I find it difficult to ask questions of a member when the member is not present.

I am in the hands of the House. In my view, under the circumstances the member can have his two minutes, but of course he cannot expect a response.

Mr. Philip: In view of the Disneyland sort of speech the member for Brampton made, maybe he will respond in some kind of new metaphysics from outside in the corridor or wherever he is.

I simply want to make the point to the member for Brampton that he tried to say he was defending small business by being in favour of this deregulationist bill. I ask the member at least to consider the circumstances surrounding the dump truck operators in 1977-78, when his party, along with ours, urged that there be not more regulation but a complete freeze on dump truck operators' authorities.

At that time, the operators of the small dump truck companies were being completely exploited by the aggregate producers, who would simply say to them: "You overload, break the law and pay the fines. If you do not like it, there are 23 or 25 other dump trucks that are willing to take a chance and haul for the pittance we are willing to offer you and who are willing to have complete disregard for safety in order that we can make a bigger buck."

That is the kind of deregulation he is essentially asking us to pass here. His motherhood comments on small business completely ignore those small businessmen, many of whom have immigrated to this country and have invested a lot of money in trying to be entrepreneurs but who faced that kind of thing in 1977 and 1978, when it was necessary not just to regulate but even to freeze operating authorities.

The very thing he is asking for will be the very thing that will hurt small business the most. I ask the member for Brampton to respond to those comments.

Mr. Gregory: I found that the member for Brampton actually had nothing to say, so I will not respond to it.

Mr. Guindon: It is a pleasure for me as the member for the great riding of Cornwall, coming from the historic part of Ontario, which is eastern Ontario, to participate in this debate on Bill 150, An Act to regulate Truck Transportation.

I am happy to be able to represent the views of some people in eastern Ontario—in fact, I think most of them—and at the same time my own point of view. I have to say at the outset I support Bill 150 in principle and I support the fact that it will

go to committee, because I feel there are a few areas where it can be improved.

I am generally opposed to government legislation for business problems. It is obvious that in my position as a member, if business people come to me and ask me for legislation on a business problem, I feel it is my duty to tell them that they should get back to work, compete, do the best they can and they will succeed. It is a little different when a constituent of mine comes to me and says, "Do not pass a law."

That is different. Then I will listen a bit more than I would to other people. If a law is going to hinder people of my riding or people in the trucking business in general, I will take time to listen to them. Many constituents of mine have brought to my attention the problems they would have with dump truck operations.

1500

One constituent came to me not long ago with his wife and his son. His wife is the chief cook and bottlewasher, dispatcher, payroll clerk and accounts payable clerk in the business, while he and his son each drive a truck. They emphatically impressed on me and told me many times that in this business they can work at best only eight months a year. During those eight months, they sometimes work 12, 14 or 16 hours a day. They feel Bill 150 opens up the borders and is very dangerous for their business in eastern Ontario.

If we are going to regulate, deregulate or reregulate truck transportation, we cannot forget the plight of eastern Ontario. The former member for Cornwall was in the Legislature yesterday. He is now on the Ontario Highway Transport Board. He pressed for at least 11 years in this Legislature for the same thing I am going to keep on pressing for, namely, recognition of what the people of eastern Ontario have to fight against.

These truckers speak to me and tell me that all they have is their public commercial vehicle licences to keep themselves viable, to keep themselves in business and to keep their jobs. We have a situation where Quebec refuses reciprocity. It refuses to let our truckers go into Quebec. We cannot go anywhere past the border. In fact, even a heavy crane operator cannot work in Quebec. One needs a special permit. There has been a freeze in Quebec since 1977. They have not expanded PCV licences for transportation of aggregates or asphalt since 1977.

If we are going to support Bill 150, we cannot forget what is going to happen. They were telling me very succinctly that if we pass this bill the way it is we are going to have every turkey who owns a dump truck in Quebec coming to Ontario.

They will be acting like Oklahoma bank robbers. They will be scattered everywhere.

I want to make sure this Legislature understands the problem we have in eastern Ontario. In Ottawa, Hawkesbury and Cornwall, truck operators from Quebec are coming into Ontario and taking away our jobs and our business. That is what they are going to be doing and we are going to have to compete with that. It is hard to compete when you are regulated and the competition is not. There is definitely no reason to have to operate with a pair of handcuffs on. That is exactly what they impressed on me.

We hear a lot throughout Canada and in southern Ontario about growing United States protectionism. It is very important, but we in eastern Ontario are more concerned about Quebec protectionism. We have people who come from Quebec. Of course, our doors are open. If the hat fits the former government in what I am going to say, then fine, it is going to have to wear it. However, it also fits this government because our laws leave the doors wide open. Tradesmen from Quebec can come and work in Ontario any time they want. They can compete for jobs and we let them be and do not bother them. Our tradesmen cannot even go in with their own hammers, nails or screwdrivers to work on jobs in Quebec. They are booted out.

This is for an area that had 14.9 per cent unemployment in December 1986. I am not fooling around with figures; I am serious. There is never anyone in this Legislature who is willing to give eastern Ontario its fair share.

Before we pass this law, we need a guarantee from Quebec that it is going to act on this now. My information is that Quebec is not interested in looking at it for three or four years. The truckers are going to be out of business. We are going to have a lineup of Quebec trucks coming into Ontario and they are going to be cleaning up on the jobs. Whenever there is no construction in Quebec, they are going to be competing in Ontario for the same jobs. They are probably going to want to do it at a discount because they have to keep their trucks going. They have to pay their insurance. They have to pay their bills too. It leaves our people at a disadvantage.

We need a level playing field. We cannot have it without speaking to the Quebec government. Quebec governments of the past 20 years have been acting that way, and it should be changed now. We cannot give them another tool or another advantage on us. It is nice to think we want to be all-Canadian and for all of Canada, yet we come up with and pass another law that is

going to put eastern Ontario people and businesses in jeopardy.

I was in touch with some of those people again. They let me know they had received a letter from the minister or the ministry in regard to that latest point, but they are not going to do anything about the Quebec-Ontario problem or the interprovincial problem because they do not want to antagonize Quebec. Somebody is going to have to speak up for eastern Ontario darned soon, and I will be taking up that role. I am going to remind this government every time that I cannot support anything that is going to put the residents in my area at a disadvantage.

In Cornwall, it is important. I have mentioned 14.9 per cent unemployment in the area. That is high enough. There is going to be an overcapacity of trucks in the dump truck field. Truckers are going to be driving into Ontario and bidding on the same jobs. Our people are going to suffer, and we are not going to be better off with it.

Je voudrais expliquer brièvement le point de vue des Ontariens dans l'Est de l'Ontario, toujours dans la région d'où je viens. Je voudrais soulever des objections au projet de loi 150, parce qu'on a déjà assez de problèmes à faire concurrence pour l'ouvrage. On a déjà assez de problèmes avec le chômage. Il faudrait absolument voir à ce qu'on ne passe pas une autre loi qui occasionnera encore plus de chômage et plus de temps durs pour les gens de l'Est de l'Ontario, qui ont travaillé si fort pour garder leurs emplois et aussi pour garder leurs compagnies.

A moment ago I mentioned a level playing field. In eastern Ontario, we see that a level playing field from the Quebec point of view is for them to own the field, the stands and the stadium, the lights and the two baseball teams. From our point of view, it is nothing but a cliff. To get things straight and put things on the record, it is important that the members of this House realize what is going to happen to an already overtaxed area like eastern Ontario.

Mr. Polsinelli: The member for Cornwall (Mr. Guindon) makes some valid points dealing with interprovincial trade barriers. While our federal government is busy sleeping in the back rooms of the President of the United States, we should really be more concerned about the barriers that exist in Canada and that impede trade between one province and another.

Does there not come a time when one province, or each of the provinces, should take a step forward in a spirit of good faith and unilaterally do what it can to break down these

barriers? At least then we can have some type of free trade in Canada and within Canada.

1510

Mr. Pouliot: Yesterday we heard the member for Mississauga East (Mr. Gregory) speak at some length, telling us there were really no problems regarding the bill but that, nevertheless, it would have to go to committee; more meetings were required or advice would have to be sought.

The more we develop the major theme, the more we begin to understand that not all the answers have been given to the assembly and not all the substance has been put forward in terms of addressing the subject matter. It is very important.

My good friend the member for Cornwall has cautioned the minister about the system as we move from Ontario to Quebec into a provincial system and back from Quebec to Ontario. I have a letter dated August 8, 1986. It is addressed to the Honourable John Crosbie, who was the creator of this affair under Bills 18 and 19 at the federal level. I am sure my good friends from the Conservative Party are aware of that.

We have four pages that are nothing short of a litany of legitimate problems that need addressing. They are concerned. They come from Manitoba, the other sister province; we in central Canada, they to the west of us and Quebec to the east of us. It is an amazing document. The more you start to dig into this affair, the more worried you get.

We know the kind of alliance that will prevail when it comes time to vote later on this afternoon on this matter. We will oppose the legislation, but we will look forward to debating clause by clause every one of those issues. We look forward to having the minister and his staff give us the kind of answers we can live with.

Mr. Gregory: I want to commend the member for Cornwall, who certainly was speaking on an issue I touched on yesterday in my remarks. It is a very important problem, one that the minister is going to have to address, because the inequality that has taken place on the eastern borders with the dump truck situation between Ontario and Quebec is a little more than just cross-province reciprocity. There is no lack of reciprocity with transport trucks between Quebec and Ontario, but there certainly is with dump truck operations. That is the problem which the member for Cornwall is addressing, and he has every right to do it. I hope the minister was listening; I am sure he was.

Mr. Guindon: The member for Yorkview (Mr. Polsinelli) mentioned that the federal government was asleep or was having meetings on acid rain or whatever. Maybe he did not feel it was not important, or maybe I did not quite understand him. This is a longtime problem. It is a problem for eastern Ontario, and it is not just in transportation. I am here now and talking about transportation, but it is a problem with the egg marketing board, it is a problem with farmers and it is a problem with jobs. It is a problem all the time.

We are good enough to say, "Okay, you can come and work in our province." I am sure members understood that, but I will say it again: "You can come work in Ontario," and this has been going on for years, "take away our jobs and go back home when you do not need them." There are 2,000 to 6,000 Quebecers working in Ontario. We do not complain. They go as far as the nuclear centres; they are working on nuclear projects. We do not complain. We cannot even go into Quebec; they will not let our workers in there.

It is not all the government's fault, I understand. They are working right now on Bill 119 in Quebec in regard to this problem and trying to alleviate it, but the unions are a little bit stronger in Quebec than perhaps they should be, and they are controlling that part of the legislation. It is in committee right now and they are having problems; it will probably come out all washed up.

They are definitely not going to do anything on interprovincial trucking for another three to four years. During the three to four years, it will take about one year for the Quebecers to smarten up and find out that they can do jobs in Ontario. They can take away some of our business, and then they will be into it. All they need is a fitness permit and a licence plate. That is all they are going to need. They do not have to go before a board and prove we need the service. It is going to be chaos. A lot of our own people are going to lose their jobs and businesses. That is what I am upset about.

Mr. Morin-Strom: I appreciate the opportunity to speak on Bill 150, An Act to regulate Truck Transportation. This bill has not received much public recognition, but I think it is rather revealing in terms of where the Liberal government is taking this province with respect to deregulating industry and with respect to the free trade debate.

Particularly interesting were the comments we just heard from the member for Yorkview. He

said the federal government has been asleep at the switch and why should the province not initiate a move for free trade in this industry? Why do we have to wait for the federal government to initiate such a move?

The Premier (Mr. Peterson) has been making good press during the past year or so by fighting Brian Mulroney on the free trade initiative, putting on an act that he was defending the province's position in respect of free trade, while on an issue such as this, which is right at the heart of free trade, when it comes to this specific industry, the province is acting against the interests of the industry, the workers of this province and the consumers of this province, who need to have low-cost, efficient transportation service available to all communities in this province, not just to those areas where the big operators are interested in going.

I have not been heavily involved in this issue during the years, as some of my colleagues have, such as the member for Etobicoke (Mr. Philip), who spoke yesterday. While I do not have some of the experience they do, I did have one very good experience; that was to sit on the select committee on economic affairs, which looked at the free trade issue. The select committee had a major presentation from the Ontario Trucking Association which addressed the issue of free trade and, in particular, the issue of deregulation of the Ontario trucking industry. I want to read the bottom line of that presentation. It was, "The Ontario Trucking Association, which represents a major provincial transportation service industry, is concerned that free trade in trucking services could jeopardize the future of the Ontario and Canadian trucking industries and have harmful economic effects."

I want to go into their presentation in some detail, so that my arguments are not just arguments I am putting forward but arguments coming forward from people who have experience in the industry. We had the opportunity as a committee to speak with them for several hours and get into, in some depth, the issue of what deregulation had done to the trucking industry in the United States, what it had done in other countries such as Australia, which has lived with it a lot longer than has the United States, and what they anticipated it could mean for the trucking industry in Ontario and Canada as a whole.

I am going to go through some of the implications the Ontario Trucking Association presented to us in its written submission, which summarized some of the consequences of dereg-

ulation of that industry and what would happen with a wide-open, free market in trucking. This is right from their submission, from the section entitled "The Implications of Free Trade for the Trucking Industry."

First: "Canadian carriers will have limited potential to expand into US markets, whereas US carriers are well placed to achieve a high level of penetration of Canadian and Ontario trucking markets." In other words, we will be the losers in a free trade scenario in a wide-open battle for the trucking industry across our borders.

Second: "An agreement already exists between Canada and the United States to prevent, in principle, a major shift in trucking services between the two countries. It recognizes Canada's vulnerability, but its practical application is uncertain." In other words, we already have an auto pact type of agreement.

This has not been discussed heavily, but there is an agreement called the Gotlieb-Brock agreement signed by the Canadian and US governments that ensures Canada will attain and maintain a fair share of the trucking between the two countries. We are currently protected in terms of our trucking industry in the same fashion as is our auto industry. I cannot understand why we would want to give that up and move to deregulation and an open market for the trucking industry.

1520

Third: "The Ontario Highway Transportation Board has concluded that if a shift in trucking services occurs, it will work strongly to the detriment of the Ontario-based trucking industry." Why are we contradicting the recommendations of the Ontario Highway Transport Board in terms of the direction in which this government is taking us?

Another point: "Free trade in trucking services would have potentially large negative economic and fiscal impacts. Job losses in Ontario alone could be in the thousands, losses in local purchases of goods and services in the hundreds of millions of dollars, and reductions in taxation revenues of similar proportions."

This is not a presentation of the Teamsters or some other union. This is a presentation of the Ontario Trucking Association. I am sure there are similar concerns, if not greater concerns, among the workers of this province who are involved in this industry.

Their written submission contains in its conclusion the following comment: "A balance of trucking trade should remain a basic objective in trade negotiations. This will require review of

a wide range of regulatory provisions applied on both sides of the border."

I have no problem with the concept of changing the regulations in Ontario. There are undoubtedly many regulations governing the trucking industry that require change. A reregulation of the industry is called for after the years since the original bill was passed. There are problems.

However, this bill does not do that. This bill eliminates regulation of the trucking industry and opens it up to free trade, to a wide-open market, as long as a competitor is capable and passes a fitness test. Certainly, any of the large US carriers are fit to haul traffic and to compete in our market. We are going to be vulnerable and we are going to lose jobs in this province.

Their conclusion includes the following quote:

"There should be no further deregulation of US-Canada trucking. Canada already has open trucking access to the US, but there are many nontariff barriers to expansion. Free trade in trucking would give nothing to Canadian carriers, but would open the doors to US carriers bringing in US-made goods and supported by US services. This would advantage US manufacturers vis-à-vis their Canadian counterparts."

This is exactly diametrically opposed to the position of the current Ontario Liberal government, which is promoting free trade in actual practice in legislation such as this rather than working to ensure that the interests of workers, communities and industries in this province, such as the trucking industry, are protected.

I have a final quote from the written submission by the Ontario Trucking Association:

"The Ontario trucking industry is vulnerable to free trade. Revenues earned by US-Canada traffic flows contribute a very much larger share of the total revenues of Canadian carriers than of US carriers. Free trade discussions should take into account the present agreement signed by Canada and the United States which aims at maintaining some balance in transborder trucking services."

This is the Gotlieb-Brock agreement. I have a copy of that agreement, which was sent by US Trade Representative William Brock to Mr. Gotlieb in 1982. It is the basis for protection of Canadian interest. The key point which makes it an auto pact agreement is point number two in the letter:

"Both sides subscribe to providing full, fair and equitable opportunities among truckers from both countries to compete for the carriage of international traffic. They recognize, however,

that there are differences in the policies and economies of the two countries which may affect the competitive opportunities available to motor carriers. If these differences result in a major shift in the balance of trade in trucking services to the injury or detriment of an important segment of the industry, the parties will use the consultative mechanisms provided in section 5."

In other words, both sides have agreed that there will be a fair distribution of the trucking trade between the two countries and that there is provision for the Canadian government to protect this industry from the potential US domination with which we are threatened by this legislation.

I want to go into some of the detailed discussions we had in the hearings with members of the Ontario Trucking Association and bring forward from their standpoint some of the problems they see with deregulation of the trucking industry and some of the consequences we could well see in Ontario.

One of the concerns they expressed very strongly was that the Macdonald royal commission, which conducted the original study that led to the federal government pursuing its free trade initiative, never took a serious look at the trucking industry and the consequences of deregulating that industry, what free trade in trucking would mean to the economy of Canada. They said they regretted quite a bit the fact that trucking services in particular had not been addressed by the Macdonald royal commission.

I have been using the analogy of free trade and deregulation and trying to make the tie, but it is not only my tie. I will read the comment of Raymond Cope, executive vice-president and general manager of the Ontario Trucking Association, who made the presentation before the select committee on economic affairs. He stated: "We relate free trade to open borders for trucking. That is the linkage we see and that is the issue on which I will focus in a few minutes. It is an important issue that we think could pose big problems for the Ontario trucking industry." Mr. Cope went on to say, "The Ontario trucking industry is very vulnerable to free trade."

He expressed concerns that the revenues on the traffic flows are a much larger share of the business for the Canadian truckers than for the American truckers. Those cross-border revenues, if they were opened up to competition, would leave the Canadian truckers much more vulnerable than the American truckers in that competition. Of course, that applies to many other industries in the province as well.

He thought free trade discussions should take into account the agreement already signed by Canada and the US which aims at balancing trans-border trucking services; that is, the Gotlieb-Brock agreement. The trucking industry is a very important industry in this province, and we should not lose sight of that. In the transportation industry in total—and the latest figures I have are for 1983—our gross revenues were \$28 billion in Canada. Of that, the largest component was trucking at a total of some \$11 billion, which represents 35 to 40 per cent of the transportation industry.

In Canada there are some 9,000 trucking establishments which report to the Statistics Canada surveys. These establishments deploy some 322,000 units of equipment and employ 175,000 persons. However, these figures do not give an indication of the full scope of that industry in the country, because many of the trucks are in the private sector, separate from the trucking industry, and are doing distributions for individual companies such as grocery stores and hardware stores, and there are various other companies in other fields that may have their own trucking fleets that are not a part of the trucking industry per se.

1530

Thus, in total, it is estimated that there are some 600,000 units of equipment coast to coast, about 40 per cent of them in Ontario. That brings the total industry's employment probably to in the neighbourhood of 500,000 people in Canada. In Ontario, it is estimated that about 200,000 are involved in the trucking industry. It is a very big business for Ontario and for Canada.

The Ontario Trucking Association made the point very strongly that Canadian carriers have very limited potential to expand into United States markets, while US carriers are in a much better place to pursue opportunities in the Canadian market.

One very interesting point it made was that in the United States deregulation applied to interstate traffic only—in other words, traffic between states—but in most states the intrastate markets remain under very rigid regulation. In other words, within New York state the trucking industry on hauls between New York City and Buffalo or Rochester is still regulated.

Why Ontario is moving to open up the Ontario industry, going even further than what has happened in the United States—opening up not just across the borders but within Ontario, allowing any competitors who can prove themselves fit to carry goods to then be able to carry

from one Ontario point to another—is beyond me. We do not have that opportunity in the United States, and I do not understand why we are doing it here in Ontario. Ontario is in the forefront of the free trade movement when it comes to the trucking industry.

As an example of what may happen to traffic movement in the trucking industry, Mr. Cope used an example of traffic starting, say, in Toronto and going to Detroit, Cincinnati and Atlanta. In this case, you would have haulage among one Canadian and three American points. If you look strictly at the Toronto-Atlanta movement and picture a 48-foot van that is fully loaded, the opportunities for Canadian and American carriers are not very much different on a full load, the full-distance haul. The Ontario Trucking Association says that on that kind of haulage it can compete reasonably well.

However, when it comes to less-than-truckload traffic, which is a significant part of traffic flow, then the advantage really moves to the US. If some of the traffic is going to Atlanta, some to Cincinnati and some to Detroit, then what is being done is called commingling traffic. There are three types of traffic in the US portion: intrastate traffic, say, traffic that may move strictly within Ohio; interstate traffic between two states; and foreign traffic.

US law requires that traffic carried on an intrastate or an interstate basis move on US tax-paid equipment employing US drivers. You must have an operation in which, by law, US equipment and US drivers must be used for the intrastate and interstate traffic. In other words, when there is a carrier who wants to drop off certain amounts in each of the three centres—in this case Detroit, Cincinnati and Atlanta—if it is a Canadian carrier, once he has dropped off part of his load in each of those intermediate points, he cannot take on additional business. He has no opportunity to supplement his lessened truckload for the remainder of his route, but an American carrier can. We are at a tremendous competitive disadvantage in that situation.

In terms of the less-than-truckload haulage, most of the major distribution points are in the United States. There are some 40 cities in the United States with populations of a million or more. In Canada, there are only three. Most of the haulage is between the major centres. The less-than-truckload haulage means that it is far better to operate under the US laws where one can go from point to point and supplement the haulage with the additional traffic.

The association's conclusion to situations such as this was that it would be the sensible thing for Canadian carriers on this side of the border to pick up their companies and move them across the border, because the US law regarding equipment and drivers is so straightforward.

Another concern strongly expressed by the Ontario Trucking Association was that governments in Canada should not move to deregulate the industry in advance of any free trade agreement. It did not have an idea about whether a free trade agreement would be achieved from the Mulroney initiative, but it was very concerned that if we were to move in trucking in advance of such an agreement, we could end up with the worst of all possible worlds, that is, free trade in trucking and no movement on the remainder of that agreement. It saw no need to move in advance on the trucking issue.

As well as the presentation from Mr. Cope from the Ontario Trucking Association, John Sanderson, vice-president of CP Express and Transportation Ltd., one of Canada's largest carriers, also had some comments to make about the deregulation of the trucking industry. It was interesting that CP had prepared a brief as well, one which was done for the purpose of market planning within CP and to advise its own employees about what might happen under a free trade arrangement.

Mr. Sanderson says: "From that we developed a position of concern about the future, about our company, about the trucking industry and about the industry that is our customer base, particularly the customers located in Ontario. We do deal from coast to coast and we have operations in all 10 provinces. The observations I make are based on many years of experience in dealing with international trade as seen through the eyes of the motor carrier.

"In looking at the impact of free trade, or what I would call trade deregulation"—Mr. Sanderson used the analogy that free trade for the trucking industry is deregulation—"we see that the most likely trend under free trade would be to use the infrastructure to deliver goods to Canada and to effect the closure of branch plants and transfer both manufacturing and jobs to the United States."

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Mr. Sanderson felt it was clear to the trucking industry that the impact of deregulation on the balance that now exists between imports from the US and branch plant manufacturers would be negative on Canada.

He goes on to say: "To expand the US-based distribution system to serve the Canadian market would require only an expansion of the existing US-to-Canada transport channels, using large carriers to funnel shipments into the major distribution points in Canada. Given open entry to Canada by and for US motor carriers and given the US policy to export US-based services and goods to Canada, it seems likely that US-based carriers would deliver these services directly to Canada.

"For a Canadian-based industry, the equivalent opportunity to penetrate US markets is not so readily apparent. First, it does not seem likely that US-controlled branch plants in Canada would be given the opportunity to market in the United States. They do not have that opportunity now in most cases, and it seems to us unlikely that it would be given."

Their conclusion, not only in terms of what will happen to the trucking industry but also of the impact on the whole branch plant structure of manufacturing in southern Ontario, was, "It will more likely mean a reduction in manufacturing activity in Canada and particularly Ontario."

Both of these spokesmen were very negative, not only about the possibility of deregulation but also about what they saw as happening with the branch plant economy, particularly in southern Ontario, and what the US owners of those branch plants would do if Canada as a whole moved towards a free trade agreement eliminating the tariff and nontariff barriers on all industry, not just the trucking industry.

"Currently, the federal and provincial governments are examining deregulation across both provincial and international boundaries and, should free trade in trucking be implemented without any controls, it seems very likely to us that US-based carriers will move to carry the majority of US-Canada trade at the expense of the Canadian-based carriers."

He also stated that unilateral deregulation would be a serious mistake for Ontario, an action on which Bill 150 is intended to proceed.

"It is important that any deregulation of motor carrier services between Canada and the United States be considered carefully in the light of its effect on the flow of trade and with respect to the overall strategy on free trade. It would be most unfortunate for Canada if, following an in-depth debate, it was decided to discontinue discussions only to find a de facto free trade situation had already been implemented from the United States to Canada through trucking deregulation."

In other words, if the Premier in the end vetoes a free trade agreement that is negotiated by the Canadian government, as I think many people in Ontario expect is going to happen, the trucking association said it would be most unfortunate for Canada if in that scenario we already had free trade in trucking anyway. That is exactly where the provincial government is taking us in this situation.

Why on earth do we want to move on free trade in trucking separately from other trade discussions? Not that I think those trade discussions have any value in themselves in terms of what they are pursuing, but it certainly contradicts the position the Ontario government has been pretending to take in its free trade position.

The Premier appears to be giving us a charade. When it comes to an actual case, as in the trucking industry, the Liberals are ready to move even in advance of the federal Conservatives.

I find it interesting as well that the Conservatives are going to support this initiative when we have this comment from their critic for Industry, Trade and Technology. At the hearings we had, the member for Sarnia (Mr. Brandt) had this to say on deregulation:

"It appears that in some areas of the United States where deregulation took hold in a very intense way, the larger companies made it part of their modus operandi to move into these jurisdictions, reduce prices very substantially and virtually knock out the competition. Later, they simply came back and the prices increased again to a more normal level after they had, frankly, removed the competitive factor of a local or more regional carrier."

He asked: "Is that a true statement? Did that go on in the United States? Were there a number of trucking casualties as a result of that sort of action on the part of the larger carriers, some which you addressed earlier in your comments about size?"

I quote the answer from the vice-president of CP Trucks, Mr. Sanderson: "I do not think I could have stated it any better than you just did. That was exactly the situation that took place."

He went on: "I happened to be reading this morning a press release from the common carrier conference of the American Trucking Association, and it talks about things such as 'the perilous financial plight of the industry as a result of the depressed nonexistent profit conditions caused by pricing actions and fuelled by destructive competition.'"

Those comments were also agreed to by Raymond Cope, head of the Ontario Trucking Association, who brought forward the example

of Australia, which is different from the US in the sense that it implemented deregulation a lot sooner and has had deregulation for some 30 years. There the concentration has developed since 1952, at which time the top four companies had only five per cent of the Australian trucking market. Today three companies control 70 per cent of that market.

That shows that concentration follows deregulation, so I do not understand what the member for Cochrane North (Mr. Fontaine) is talking about in terms of my being a protector of big industry. This is going to result in big industry and it is going to force the small guys out of business across northern Ontario as well as in the rest of the province.

Mr. Cope went on: "We are ready for a relaxation of regulations. But what we say is, if you go all the way then the bad experience in jurisdictions such as Australia and more recently the United States is going to happen in Canada. It is not going to do us any good, and why do we want to plunge into it?"

That is my question for the Liberal government and the minister. We have no objection to fixing up some of the problems of the current regulations. There is no doubt they need an overhaul, but let us not replace them with no regulations. Let us look at this in a sound, sensible way so we can protect the interests of the truckers, companies and workers of this province. We do not want to give away the whole industry to a few large carriers.

It is interesting that the member for Kent-Elgin (Mr. McGuigan) is here today. I have some questions from him that were presented to the committee. He asked:

"How do we stand on labour rates? I think it is generally accepted that we have slightly lower labour rates. I do not know about the trucking industry, but in the manufacturing industry we have slightly lower labour rates. How would that affect your Canadian companies operating in the United States?"

The answer from Mr. Sanderson was:

"That is a very broad question...But what you have to recognize is that with deregulation in the United States, the number of Teamster members has dropped by something like 50 per cent.

"A lot of the trucking that used to be done by Teamsters and Teamster firms that have gone bankrupt is now being done by nonunion operators at much lower wages, maybe even a third of the level of Teamster wages. There has been a marked effect on union operations in the trucking industry in the US. How these nonunion

new entrants in the business, many of which are subsidiaries of large Teamster companies, compare to Canada, is very difficult to say. It is quite a mixture."

1550

That is not a submission from the workers or from unions. That is a submission from trucking industry executives on what will be the consequences for wage levels and the shutting down of union firms in favour of the same companies starting up new nonunion firms. The effects of deregulation in the US have been to concentrate the trucking industry to about eight giants, at the expense of 400 to 500 middle-sized firms with 1,000 to 2,000 employees each.

The member for Hamilton East (Mr. Mackenzie) said:

"At the expense, as you also pointed out very clearly in answer to a question, of wages, union contracts and workers. In other words, they have also carried a good chunk of the cost of deregulation."

The answer from Mr. Sanderson was:

"That is very true. Whether the same result would occur in Canada, your guess is as good as mine, but we think the same factors hold. The reason for the reduction in cost has been the use of longer trucks, a reduction in increases in taxation of the trucking industry and a reduction in wages as carriers move to nonunion organizations."

One of the interesting facts here too in terms of deregulation is that there is no benefit in terms of new business; there is no new business available.

"Deregulation in trucking is somewhat different from that in airlines, say, because no new freight is created by deregulating trucking even if the price drops."

If the price on an airline dropped to \$100 on a discount fare, it may attract someone to take a trip who may not otherwise, but in terms of the haulage of material, there is so much that has to be hauled and is going to be hauled no matter what the price level is. The wide-open market ends up being a cut-throat business, forcing others out of the business until there are only a few giant firms left.

Finally, I would like to address the issue of sovereignty. Again, loss of sovereignty is implicit in this type of action. Loss of sovereignty is not a priority for the federal government. It is not a priority of Brian Mulroney in his negotiations with the US. The Ontario government is making very clear in this kind of action that sovereignty is not a concern to it either.

This point was made to the representatives of the trucking industry: "It seems to me this is a case where you could make a legitimate argument that the deregulation we would have to bring about as part of the competitive procedure in Canada would mean we would have to accept a lessening, if you like, of our sovereignty." They responded, "I think that is very true."

The industry here expresses concern not only about the concentration but also that concentration is very likely to go into the hands of the large US companies. The US freight carriers are much larger than the Canadian ones. The question to them was whether the big carriers in Canada would be, as currently, CP, CN, Kingsway and TNT, or whether instead they would become Yellow Freight, Roadway, Consolidated Freightways and Ryder PIE. That is a very big question for the Canadian industry.

I could go on for another hour probably.

Mr. Pouliot: No, you will not.

Mr. Morin-Strom: My colleague the critic is saying I should wrap this up as quickly as possible.

Mr. Foulds: No; go. This is deregulated speaking time.

Mr. Morin-Strom: The comments throughout the presentation of the Ontario Trucking Association reiterated time and again the nonsense of moving to deregulate the Ontario trucking industry and to deregulate the trucking trade between Canada and the US. Instead, we should be ensuring that we can protect Ontario industry and the jobs of Ontario workers.

We should be pursuing more strongly arrangements like the Gotlieb-Brock agreement and ensuring that agreement has enforceability provisions, which there were concerns about. That agreement stated that in principle the US and Canada agreed to a fair share of the trade in trucking between the two countries.

In that regard, spokesmen were asked to comment on the possibility of an auto pact type of agreement with the US. While they saw some difficulties in negotiating because of the complexity of the industry and the numbers of firms, which is quite different from the auto industry where you have several major ones, Mr. Cope said, "I have not yet seen a blueprint for it that would make an easier answer, but it is not beyond the wit of man to produce a plan that could be as successful as the auto pact." Mr. Sanderson of CP Trucks supported Mr. Cope with a simple, "I support that statement."

I suggest the Ontario government go back to the drawing board on this legislation, reassess its

approach to the Ontario trucking industry and look at the opportunities we have to protect the viability of truckers in Ontario. I am not just talking about the major companies that belong to the Ontario Trucking Association; I am also talking about the small operators across Ontario that do not have equal opportunity to compete on trucking routes and that will have even less of an opportunity to compete once we get more large carriers from the US competing in our market and forcing the little guys out of business, as has happened in the US.

We should take to heart the advice we have received. I do not see any justification whatsoever for proceeding with this bill. I hope it is defeated this afternoon.

Mr. McGuigan: I am glad the member for Sault Ste. Marie (Mr. Morin-Strom) brought up my questioning when we had members of the trucking association in. I am still puzzled by the contradictory aspects of that. They said we were going to drive the Canadians out because we are so vulnerable, yet we use the same trucks and the same tires. The only thing that is any different is the fuel and there is a regulation that in crossing the border into Canada you cannot bring in a lot of cheap US fuel. As a matter of fact, the biggest truck maker in North America is International Harvester, which makes trucks in Chatham; those are used in Canada and in the US.

I cannot see where this vulnerability business comes in. The member has not backed up his statements to point out the reasons that we might be more vulnerable.

Mr. Morin-Strom: How about nonunion workers at lower wages?

Mr. McGuigan: I cannot follow the reasoning when he says it is going to result in fewer unionized drivers, yet at the same time he says we are going to end up with three or four huge conglomerate companies. Surely those huge conglomerate companies are the legitimate and most successful targets of unionization.

We are not doing anything to do away with the Labour Relations Act. I do not think it should be the business of any act to impinge upon labour relations, either for them or against them. A union has to stand upon its own merits and its own feet. It seems to me that if this is going to lead to a lot of large companies, then we have the ideal situation where the union can prevail. I am afraid the member for Sault Ste. Marie has not used arguments that are very convincing.

1600

Mr. Philip: I have some questions stimulated by the last comments and questions of my friend and former boss the member for Kent-Elgin.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Morin): The questions should be asked of the member for Sault Ste. Marie.

Mr. Philip: Does the member for Sault Ste. Marie not see quite an analagous situation between the trucking industry, which is an essential service, and farming? If this Liberal government believes in deregulation of the trucking industry, an essential service, the logical conclusion is that its next step will be the deregulation of farming; namely, the abolition of marketing boards. How can you have regulation of one essential industry but deregulation of another? Would that make sense?

Is the member for Sault Ste. Marie not aware that the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, when faced with a deregulation of trucking motion, defeated it on the very grounds that it would be inconsistent for a farmer such as the member for Kent-Elgin to favour deregulation of the trucking industry while at the same time advocating marketing boards for his own industry?

Mr. Pouliot: I was also the recipient of most apropos comments from my colleague and neighbour in the House the member for Sault Ste. Marie. He is very much aware, as were his predecessors—we have had nine or 10 speakers and everyone has talked about deregulation; no one has challenged that terminology. For the benefit of the member for Sault Ste. Marie, this is from an address by the Minister of Transportation and Communications (Mr. Fulton) and is dated November 20: "Hence these reform proposals will steer clear of the virtual deregulation which occurred in the United States some six years ago."

He knows the kind of mess that was encountered by our southern neighbour. The minister is telling us these bills have nothing to with deregulation and yet everything gives us a meticulous definition of what he wishes deregulation to be. It is really appalling and shocking. It seems to be a contradiction unless one ties it in with a philosophy or ideology that characterizes all in that party, and then one will wish to deregulate other areas such as financial institutions and the telephone system. I find it a little astounding.

I hope the minister will be given the opportunity in the days ahead to be clear and to shed some clarification on what is becoming a can of worms of the highest order. We want to understand but we find it difficult to believe.

Mr. Gregory: I listened with interest to the past number of speakers. Although I was not here all the time, I listened to the member who gave

the speech. I am always amazed at the hysterics that occur to my left. We are talking about a bill that is truly reregulation. It is not deregulation and nobody is claiming it to be that. We are simply changing the procedures by which one person or group of persons gets into the business.

I heard one of the speakers talking about the trucking industry as an essential service. It might well be in the broadest possible terms or definition of "essential service." However, you do not classify the trucking industry as an essential service in the same way you do a doctor, a hospital and things such as that.

Mr. Foulds: Tell that to the people in Armstrong.

Mr. Gregory: Go ahead.

Mr. Foulds: Tell that to the people in northern Ontario who depend for their food on the trucking industry.

The Acting Speaker: Order.

Mr. Gregory: Mr. Speaker, would it be out of order if I told the member who recently spoke that he has the brains of a jackass?

The Acting Speaker: I would not accept that. Please continue.

Mr. Gregory: Then I will have to retract. The hysterics that go on in this chamber are quite amazing. The fact is that the trucking industry is a very necessary service, but it is a business the same as any other business. It cannot be classed as an essential service in the same way—

Mr. Foulds: So is the medical profession a business like any other business.

Mr. Gregory: There seems to be no logic. The people over there seem to be motivated totally by the wishes of the union. They do not care whether we are improving the bill or not. I hope the minister did not pay too much attention to the last few remarks from those people.

Mr. Morin-Strom: In regard to the comment of the last speaker, the member for Mississauga East, my only comment is that I did not know dinosaurs laid eggs.

In regard to the comments of the member for Kent-Elgin on competitive position, there are reasons the business goes to the big operators in a wide-open market system for trucking. It has to do with financial strength, the ability to absorb losses in the short run, bring the prices down and force the competition out of the business. That is what happened in the US. A few big companies, about eight very large firms, forced the rest of the companies out of the market.

At the same time, in terms of price competition, on the cost side there are ways of getting around the issue of wage levels. One of the things that happened was that they phased out their union firms and started up new subsidiaries that were nonunion and included a lot of contracting out of the work to owner-operators. That is where a lot of the business has gone: away from union employees to owner-operators.

The other big issue in terms of the competitive situation of Canada versus the US is that Canadian operators do not have the opportunity to haul between US points. I go back to the case where someone is hauling between one Canadian point and several American points. The American operators will be able to haul and fill up to their full capacity at all points. The Canadians will be restricted, so they are at a competitive disadvantage.

Deregulation as a whole is a philosophy the Ontario Liberals are endorsing, and it is an endorsement of free trade.

Mr. McCague: I congratulate the minister for bringing this bill forward. It is a very difficult bill, a very difficult process. A lot of legislative and ministry time has been spent on it over a great number of years.

I do not think anybody in this House would argue with the fact that the trucking business is at present somewhat in turmoil. There are those large companies that we hear from on a regular basis, regardless of which side of the House we sit on, and they have one set of criteria. Then there are those smaller operators, for whom the NDP seem to have some sympathy, who have a slightly different view of the matter and, it is true, do not have the resources to bring forth their opinions to the same extent as the larger truckers.

However, given that all is not well in the industry, that there needs to be some revision, that a lot of time has been spent on considering the matter and that there has been a lot of consultation, it is my personal recommendation that we proceed into committee with this bill. It is very important—in fact, it is a must—that the bill be referred to committee so that those who have opinions, whatever they may be, have ample opportunity to express them and to persuade the minister, I am sure, to change his mind on some of the points.

1610

Members of the New Democratic Party talk at great length about air disasters. I cannot prove and neither can they that air disasters are related to any deregulation. They talk about the fact that small municipalities will not be served. There is

no obligation now that companies serve those small municipalities; yet I feel municipalities in most cases are getting service.

I would like to listen to some of the things the member for Port Arthur (Mr. Foulds) says about safety, but less than half an hour ago he tried to run me down out in the hall; so I do not think the minister should listen to him any more on matters of safety.

Mr. Foulds: You were the guy who was running; I was just ambling backwards.

Mr. McCague: The member has done a lot of that.

However, at present it is not mandatory that those areas be serviced. I think the chances of their being serviced will be better under the new act than under the old act, because the ease of entry will encourage more people to set up small businesses and provide a service based on safety and true service. It is true that lots of big companies can give on-time service without any great difficulty, but people in the small towns that all members have in their ridings appreciate the personal kind of service a one-man operation, for instance, may be able to give to them. Not only will it be, with revisions, good legislation, but there are also some bright spots in the future for service and safety.

It is interesting that so much time has been put into this and still there is no agreement. I understand that. There are so many different groups, represented by so many different associations, that it is very difficult to bring them all together. I suggest this is not a matter we should now relegate to the strictly political process. It needs to be referred to committee, and each party has members there. The mandate should not be to win political points but to come up with the best act we can in the interest of safety, the people in the business and all citizens of the province.

I know the minister will not have anything to do with the appointment of the committee, but I would look forward to serving on that committee with him, if it should be the will some time of the House leaders.

A few points have been entered into the record. I have not heard them all, but I recall the recent remarks of December 22—they are not the most recent—of the trucking association about the act at that time. Basically, they were saying it had some weaknesses. Sure it does, but it is basically a good act. They were saying the safety regulations are not strong enough.

While the NDP would like to cite what has happened in Australia, California, Ohio and other places, surely the good people of the

Ministry of Transportation and Communications, the minister, the government and all members of this House have enough common sense to take the best of what is known from other areas, not fall into the pitfalls other jurisdictions have fallen into, and come up with sound legislation.

The NDP is trying to persuade all and sundry we are entering into a colossal catastrophe. We are not. Those are the tactics it has used for years and years, and I do not think that is responsible, especially in this case. I think we can come up with an excellent bill if it is the will of the three parties, and I suggest that it should be.

I also suggest that it is not deregulation but rather reregulation. Deregulation would not do much. I note two and a half pages of regulation-making powers in the bill the minister has brought forward.

One of the things concerning a lot of people—and which should concern them—is that the federal and provincial governments should get the proper timing. If that does not happen, it has been pointed out to us that it will be a can of worms, if that is not already the case.

The minister wants to extricate cabinet and probably himself from making any decisions or as few as possible. In sections 36 and 37 of the act, there is legal opinion that the minister is not accomplishing what he set out to do. That should be carefully checked before the committee stage.

There was some discussion on section 25, which authorizes an officer of the ministry to obtain documents from a driver or a licensee for the purposes of making copies and provides for their admissibility in court. Some people say this may be viewed by the courts as forcing an individual to provide self-incriminating evidence. However, those things can be checked in committee.

The dump-truck operators have what I consider to be some real concerns. My colleague the member for Cornwall has pointed out the interprovincial problem, particularly the problem with trucks coming over from Quebec and the barrier that seems to be in our way when we try to go in the other direction. That applies not only in trucking but also to a great extent in labour.

The unions may have some good points, but I for one would be very happy to hear in committee what any citizens in Ontario, in the communities and in business have to say about this. I would be very happy to hear what the labour unions have to say about it. We should quit fiddling with an antiquated system, put all our heads together and

come up with an excellent bill. I would be prepared to be a part of that. I recommend that this bill follow the next step, go to committee and take whatever time it takes to come up with the best we can in the interests, particularly of safety, but just as important, of service to the public.

Mr. Mackenzie: I am delighted to take part briefly in this debate, inasmuch as second reading is debate on principle. That suits me just fine, because my colleagues can talk all they want about the bill being or not being deregulation. In fact, what we have is Bill 150, which really is, and two bills that are supportive of it.

I could get very exercised about this legislation in this debate, but I do not intend to. The interesting thing is how clearly it exposes the Liberal government as a business government. I do not know what the difference is between the Liberals and the Tories on this issue. I have been trying desperately to find some reason for this legislation. I thought I might have found one when I went to—and I know it is heresy in this House to mention it—a union publication. The member for Mississauga East makes it very clear that he has no use for unions almost every time he speaks.

I looked at the donations to the political parties in 1984. I was a little aghast. I do not have them for 1985, unfortunately, but in the transportation industry—these are federal donations as registered—the Tories, for some reason or other, got \$222,469 and the Liberals got only \$130,651 from the major transportation companies.

Mr. Haggerty: How much did the member's party get?

Mr. Mackenzie: We got nothing. The biggest donor was Canadian Pacific, and I suppose that was not all just trucking. They played it very carefully: \$51,500 to the Liberals and \$51,500 to the Conservatives. I had to wonder whether this bill had not something to do with the Liberals being desperate to catch up with the corporate donations from the trucking industry. Why was there such an advantage of \$93,000 to the Tories? Their position is clear. We now know where the Liberals stand. Their position is just as clear and supports deregulation.

1620

Why are we concerned? I have not seen deregulation yet that has been very effective in helping workers. In most cases, the evidence is clear that it has an adverse effect, usually on jobs, certainly on wages and on health and safety matters. I want to refer to two or three of them in the hearings, about which my colleague the

member for Sault Ste. Marie spoke at some length, but I will not go over them all again.

Some of the testimony came not from New Democrats and not from trade unions but from some of the leading officials of the trucking companies in Ontario and in Canada. It is not just a question of what it does to the security of workers, to the health and safety of workers, to the kind of environmental controls we have in an industry.

I wish the member for Cochrane North was in the House. He said this will help small business people. The evidence we have where there has been a major deregulation move—and I do not know what examples can be used other than Australia, which is a fairly old one, and the US, which is much more recent—clearly outlines that it was not of assistance to small business, but it was a major element of corporate concentration. The six, eight or 10 big companies in the US got much bigger, while many medium- and smaller-sized companies went out of business in the course of the deregulation battle.

I am sitting on a committee on corporate concentration that was supposed to be because the Premier and the Liberal Party were concerned about corporate concentration. Here we have a bill, the first of what will probably be several bills from this government—I do not expect anything else—that deals with deregulation.

The evidence is fairly clear and conclusive that it is likely to mean a concentration where the big get bigger and the small go out of business. How does that square with a discussion or a committee being set up or a stated position that we are very concerned about corporate concentration in this province? It does not make any sense to me, and I do not think it is going to make a lot of sense to a lot of ordinary workers across Ontario.

The one thing on which I agree with my colleague the member for Mississauga East—or maybe it was my colleague the member from Fort William (Mr. Hennessy) is that we cannot depend on the minister or the ministry personnel to protect us on an issue such as this. It is a little matter, but I recall going to this minister the very first month he was a minister in this House and telling him there was a real concern of workers in the Toronto Transit Commission, so much of a concern that on every bulletin board they have posted efforts to get the white-line provision.

That is going to cost money in terms of jamming people on to the transportation system in the city of Toronto, but it means that passengers could not stand in front of the white line on a TTC bus or trolley. The workers saw it

as a very serious safety concern and gave a couple of examples of people who had been injured or killed as a result of drivers not being able to see when they had to pull out with people standing up past that line.

I remember the minister's comments to me, and he will too, that he had sympathy for that suggestion. I moved a private member's bill on it. It is this bill I am talking about, which was posted on every bulletin board. That is a year and a half ago, and he knows I have gone to him a number of times since and raised this.

I am not sure, but I think he finally met with the union. I do know that long before he met with the union, he met with the TTC. I could have told him what they were going to say, that they would have to put more trolleys or buses on the road if that provision were brought in, that they would have to jam in these people during rush hours. That is the straight business consideration for why they have never moved.

We are no closer today than we were a year and a half ago, in spite of the minister telling me at the time he had some sympathy for the suggestion. I have no confidence or faith when it comes to a worker-protection issue being carried by this government. What they are doing with this legislation gives us no reason at all to have any more confidence they are going to do something that has as the bottom-line concern the workers, jobs, safety and health conditions and as a sideline that they should understand better the promotion of entrepreneurs and small companies, which they usually talk about. I do not see that happening in any way, shape or form with deregulation.

I do not know how they can get away from some of the comments that were made before the committee we met with. I recall most vividly the questions we asked when they told us about the effects of deregulation in the United States. They told us how prices dropped dramatically for shipping goods. A lot of small companies initially came into the market. They did not last long. After the shakedown period, about three years into it, some 300 to 400 companies in the 1,000-plus-worker range were out of business. Eight or 10 large companies had grabbed a sizeable share of the market.

When we asked questions about it, they even went on to tell us how they were looking very healthy on the stock exchange, thank you, so they were doing very well, but a lot of those small companies and medium-sized companies went out of business. More than 50 per cent of the organized workers lost their jobs. Wages went

down, so that in some cases there was as much as a 60 per cent loss of wages to the new workers, who were in the nonunion companies in many cases.

One of the questions we also asked in that committee, and I can bring the minister to the sections he can go back to in Hansard, was what happened in terms of safety, health and environmental matters. Without reading it from the report, I think the way it was put to us was that, where there were medium-sized companies in particular trying to stay in business, these were the first things that suffered. Even though they cut back on them, it did not necessarily keep them in business.

Here we had over half of the organized workers—and I know that makes the Tories as happy as blazes. They do not like unions anyhow, so if we can get rid of 50 per cent of the organized workers, that is great. It made them happy. It apparently makes the Liberals happy as well. We saw a sizeable down-sizing in their wages and benefit packages and we had questions in terms of safety and environmental controls.

The interesting thing—and once again, it did not come from New Democrats and it did not come from the unions; it came from the three company officials who were before us—was that once the shakedown was finished in the US, what happened to prices. Prices, they said when they were before us, which was six, eight or nine months ago, were back up about where they had been and were going up. Any advantage in terms of lower prices was gone, but they got what they wanted, what industry wanted, what the US government wanted and what I think this government wants, and that is anything it can do to kick down the wages, kick down the benefits and kick down the costs on that side of the ledger.

The problem is that it usually means an increase in the profits to a handful of small corporations or companies, and that is what was achieved.

In Australia the results were even more dramatic, but it is a much older scene. Five companies had something like seven or eight per cent of the business until they went to deregulation. What did they tell us? Once again, the trucking industry told us this, nobody else, that three companies in Australia now have 70 per cent of the business. Is that what this government wants, or is that what this government means, if I can put it another way, when it talks about the dangers of corporate concentration?

To me, it is a rather sick, hypocritical approach when they raise these kinds of issues in this House and then come in with legislation which is nothing but deregulation.

I do not know what we are doing in terms of workers. I do not know why we seem to feel the answer to all our problems is to drive down the standard of living of ordinary people and to allow corporate concentration. This government has clearly shown itself to be as equally far right, or whatever words one wants to use, as the Tories. Somehow or other, that total reliance on the marketplace is what is going to save us.

I suggest to them, far from it. It is the cancer in our society today, and we had better start thinking in terms of what we can do with our industry, our resources and the various facilities we have, transportation included, to see there is a better distribution of the benefits to society and not a lesser distribution of the benefits to society.

I know we are dealing in principle here, not with the individual sections of the bill, but I am simply saying to this government that if it is going to proceed with this kind of legislation, if this is about the first salvo in an approach of deregulation, as I suspect, it had better be honest and put it out front so that we know what we are dealing with. That surely appears to be what we are dealing with. Government members had better understand that they can dislike organized workers or unions as much as they like—the Tories dislike them maybe a little more than they do—but workers know, and I do not think it will find any of them on side, including the transportation people, the Teamsters or any of the unions.

1630

Mr. Epp: You do not have the monopoly on purity.

Mr. Mackenzie: You do not like listening to people.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Gillies: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order: The member for Hamilton East has twice now said that members of the Liberal and Conservative parties do not like unions. While he is entitled to his opinion, the member also said that this then motivated the position our party has taken on the bill. That is imputing motives and the member should withdraw it.

Mr. Speaker: I listened very carefully. The member did take a point of view and expressed his opinion. He expressed, I suppose, what he thought was a fact. I am sure other members will have opportunities to rise in their own places and give different points of views.

Mr. Mackenzie: I was responding to a statement by the member for Mississauga East, who said he knows my party always looks to the unions—or some such comment—and immediately does what they want to be done. We have not even discussed this issue with them in any detail, but we do know from the conventions of the Ontario Federation of Labour and the Canadian Labour Congress and from the contacts I have on a regular basis that they are concerned with this issue and they do not support deregulation.

The final point I want to make in my few remarks is simply that in the free trade battle that is going on in this country one simply cannot debate that as an issue separate from deregulation. I thought it was most significant when the trucking industry was before us and said it did not particularly want free trade. Part of its reason was what had happened in the whole US deregulation system. However, its final comments were very clear; that is, if we are going the free trade route, the government must immediately give it deregulation.

I am wondering whether we have already decided. We know the committee was much less certain than the Premier has publicly set himself up as being in terms of the free trade position of the Liberal Party. Are we opening the door before we ever finalize the free trade debate? One cannot separate deregulation from free trade. They are part and parcel of the same problem we are facing in this country of ours, and we had better be well aware of that. I think the public will be aware of it very quickly. I urge the government to take another look at this because our party will not be supporting these bills.

Mr. Speaker: Are there any comments or questions? The member for Mississauga East.

Mr. Gregory: That should not come to you as a surprise, Mr. Speaker.

I regret very much the remarks of the member for Hamilton East. I am sure that on sober second thought he will realize how wrong he is. He repeated very clearly what I had said and somehow he rearranged that to be that I had no use for unions. I will grant I am not and have never been a member of a union, but I am supported quite strongly by many union members in Mississauga East. Believe it or not, there are a great number of union people in Mississauga East, and I have a great deal of support from them. I hold no ill will because of these remarks. I realize they were made in the typical hysteria the New Democratic Party uses.

It is not true that I have no use for unions. I have no use for people who cannot make a move without the unions' opinions.

Mr. Foulds: I want to rise to oppose the bill and I want to start by saying I do so somewhat reluctantly because I can understand the desire of the minister to simplify the regulations in the trucking industry. Anybody who has understood or been involved even in a peripheral way in the kinds of hearings and money an individual has to have to go before the Ontario Highway Transport Board to get a licence and so on knows it requires a good deal of expertise, support and sophistication. It costs a lot of money.

After looking at the legislation carefully, I am convinced this does not simplify the regulations. This legislation does not reregulate; it is a bill that is not only a first step but also the major step towards deregulation. I want to talk for a minute about laws and regulations because we have to understand that our country and our province have been built on the rule of law and the rule of regulation.

No matter what the mythology around us is, I think it is fair to say that the north of this province would never have been developed, explored, mined, forested or reforested without laws and regulations. I think it is true and fair to say the transportation systems of our province and our country, going back to the 19th century, going back to the original canal systems, the river systems, the railway systems, the airline systems and the highway systems, would never have developed with the fairness in which they have developed if we had not had a system of laws and regulations aiding, abetting and helping that development.

Then we get to the argument that surely, after a century and a half of the development of laws and regulations, it is time for change and reform, that we are big enough and old enough to let the marketplace determine who gets served, who gets a licence and who survives.

I suggest that this country and this province will not survive without laws and regulations. For example, let me tell the House a little anecdote. I cannot remember the exact quotation, but in that very fine play by Robert Bolt called *A Man for All Seasons*, which was subsequently made into a movie, one of the characters says to Sir Thomas More, "I would cut down all the laws in the country to get at the devil." Thomas More says to him, "And after you have cut them all down and there is no forest with trees of laws to protect you, where will you hide from the devil?" Although the analogy may be extreme, we are in grave danger of cutting down the laws and regulations in the trucking

industry that have protected the people of this province for a good long time.

When I listened to the thoughtful comments of my colleague the member for Sault Ste. Marie this afternoon, to the emotional but heartfelt comments of my colleague the member for Hamilton East, to the thorough comments of my colleague the member for Etobicoke and to the philosophical framework initiating this debate on behalf of our party of my colleague the member for Lake Nipigon (Mr. Pouliot), I must say without bragging, hyperbole or exaggeration that only this party in this debate has given this debate a thoughtful, thorough and philosophical framework.

1640

We already have evidence in this country about what deregulation and the threat or anticipation of deregulation will do. We are told by those who advocate deregulation that it will encourage the small entrepreneur, encourage diversification and give a chance to small businessmen, but look at the example in this country of what has happened with the proposal to deregulate the airlines. That has not happened yet, but in the past year, even the proposal has led to the accumulation, the agglomeration of two trans-Canada giants.

The small independent companies such as Austin and Air Ontario have been swallowed up by the sharks in Air Canada, and the sharks, believe it or not, in Pacific Western, which was big enough to take on Nordair and Canadian Pacific and—

Mr. Pouliot: And Wardair.

Mr. Foulds: Wardair is left as well, but Wardair is left simply because it has always been a strange, independent company out of the mainstream.

Deregulation, even the anticipation of deregulation, has led to the growth of two large trans-Canada conglomerates and, as my colleague the member for Algoma pointed out yesterday, has led to a decline in service even in such a large community in this province as Sault Ste. Marie, and I am afraid that is what is going to happen in the trucking industry.

I rise to oppose this bill on three grounds. First, it will lessen competition, not enhance it; second, it will provide less service—the trucking service will ultimately provide less service in the province, not more; third, it will call into question safety on the highways of this province. When there are those three dangers in a piece of legislation, the minister should not be pushing the bill through. Where is the motivation coming

from for this piece of legislation? Why does the government want it through at this time? What is the need for it?

In terms of the competition, I want to know how, when this bill is through, the government is going to guarantee trucking service to the community of Armstrong in northern Ontario. I want to know how it is going to provide trucking service for Ear Falls, Red Lake and Sioux Lookout.

I want to know how this legislation is going to guarantee what every person in this province has a right to expect, something that is, I might say to the member for Mississauga East, surely as important as medicare, that is food itself. Our small, isolated communities could very well be starved of transportation service. Without transportation and trucking service, they will not have the basic necessities on which to live. Those are the communities that are supplied by road.

The former member for Lake Nipigon, Mr. Stokes, and the present member for Lake Nipigon have documented in this House how costs for basic services such as gasoline and food rise dramatically and astronomically in the far northern communities where there are not even road and rail services. We have expected the trend to be that trucking will take over when the railways disappear.

The railways in this country are not supplying the services to the small communities of northern Ontario. The railways of this country are not even supplying the services to the small communities of southern Ontario. Shamefully, the province has not moved into the breach to provide those services either in southern Ontario or northern Ontario. Transportation in this government's view is not a top priority. The provision of service to transportation is a secondary matter.

I believe the deregulation of the trucking industry will provide us with a serious safety problem on our highways. Yesterday the member for Algoma spoke very well, very knowingly and very movingly about the experience of the owner-operators in his area travelling from Sault Ste. Marie to Hearst and then on the haul from Hearst to Detroit. He spoke knowledgeably. Anybody who goes through these debates and reads that speech will know that is going to happen not only in a situation like that, but also in situations in northwestern Ontario down through Pigeon River to Duluth, Minneapolis and Chicago.

We view that with serious alarm, particularly in view of the fact that, if I am not mistaken, in

northwestern Ontario the usual ratio of transportation is five large commercial vehicles—transport trucks, the pulp log trucks, aggregate trucks—to one personal vehicle. If you increase the demands on the drivers and you increase the cut-throat kind of operation that either an independent owner-operator or someone working for a large company has to do in that area, you are dramatically increasing the possibility of accidents.

We know the highways in northern Ontario are not the safest in the world. In some situations, they are not bad, but we face constantly, for at least five months of the year, the possibility of these peculiar weather conditions which fluctuate around the freezing point where we can easily encounter, without warning and without notice, black ice. Once you hit that, as I know from personal experience, you have absolutely no control. It is nobody's fault; it is not the driver's, not the machine's and not the highway's fault, but it happens. You are out of control, you are spinning and you are totalled. If there is another person coming the other way, or two or three people, there is not only danger to the individual, the vehicle and the load, but also danger to the other people. We do not have the right to put at risk the drivers and the truckers or the other people.

I need not go over the arguments put forward by my colleague the member for Etobicoke, but it is instructive that the last set of public hearings, the last set of public documents, the last legislative set, came out decisively in favour of continuing regulation, despite the select committee on the highway transportation of goods. What was interesting about that experience was that the Tory government of the day was committed to deregulation. The Liberal critics of the time were committed to deregulation. However, after actually examining the question, examining the experience and examining the rights and wrongs of the situation, they came out overwhelmingly in favour of continued regulations.

1650

This is the experience that I commend to the Minister of Transportation and Communications. He has rushed into this too quickly. He has not re-read that documentation. He has not come up with the solution he wants to simplify and streamline the regulations. He is, to use the old cliché, throwing out the baby with the bath water.

I want to plead with some members of the Conservative Party for a moment. It was very interesting listening to this debate. Because of

the lead given by the member for Mississauga East, they are committed holus-bolus to voting for the bill. However, if the members examine the speeches of the member for Cornwall and the member for Kenora (Mr. Bernier)—and I re-read them carefully—all their arguments were against voting for this bill in principle.

They were what I call yeah-Buds. They were saying yeah, because Bud Gregory told them they had to say yeah. However, their reservations are so profound and their arguments supporting those reservations so great, they should break ranks with the Tory party and vote against the bill because of their primary concern. The primary concern is safety for the member for Kenora, and I very seldom agree with the member for Kenora.

Mr. McClellan: The member has never agreed with him before.

Mr. Foulds: I have never agreed with him before; that is true. I very seldom, if ever, agree with the member for Kenora. However, his concern for safety is borne of his own experience in his own region and is, I dare say, genuine. Nothing in this legislation the minister has given us will speak to that concern. The whole speech from the member for Cornwall was a speech against the bill. I plead with those two members, and others in that caucus who I am sure think like them, to have the courage to break ranks and vote against the legislation.

Finally, I want to turn back to the minister. I am sure the minister has looked at these maps a great deal, and very often. This is the highway map of southern Ontario. There is no doubt in my mind that this bill will increase competition and probably even service for a limited time in this corridor along Highway 401, maybe even in the corridor up Highway 400 as far as Barrie and maybe in the corridor around Lake Ontario.

When one turns over the map and looks at northern Ontario, it will provide the appearance of some increased competition in the first 18 months, but if one looks at a true scale map of this province, northern Ontario is far greater and far more sparsely populated than southern Ontario. This area will not be getting the service, the competition and the additional help from this government that it deserves through this legislation.

As I said earlier, who will serve the people in Red Lake up this long, thin highway? How will the minister guarantee that with his legislation? Who will service the people in Pickle Lake up this long, narrow highway or Savant Lake, as my colleague the member for Lake Nipigon reminds me? Who will service the people of Armstrong?

How will the minister guarantee service for them? With this bill he cannot.

This bill is a retreat from the essence of this country. This country is forging into the frontier. This country is developing the north. This country is about expanding our boundaries. This legislation and these regulations withdraw from that. They are saying: "Let us make Canada the safe, narrow country along the American border. Let us retreat to the urban centres where there is a lot of population."

I reject that idea of this country and this province and I hope this government will have the sense to reject that idea. I hope the Premier has the guts to cut this bill out from under this minister the way he cut out the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) from the Kimberly-Clark situation.

Hon. Mr. Fulton: I will attempt to reply to some of the comments raised by several of the members in the past two days relative to Bill 150. To begin with, several members have used the term "deregulation." This is not deregulation; it is reregulation and it is reform. This bill reforms the regulation of for-hire trucking but does not deregulate. We have removed many of the barriers to entry but introduced appropriate controls to ensure that the public will continue to be served and that a strong, viable trucking industry will exist in Ontario.

Mr. Philip: You have obviously read Orwell.

Hon. Mr. Fulton: I remind members that I have listened patiently without comment for two days. With respect, I ask them to do the same.

Several members raised the concern of the impact of highway safety. This is a valid concern. Safety is of prime concern to me as an individual and to me as minister. It is a major component of this bill and of Bill 152, which I hope will be introduced before the day is through.

The competency test will include a test of the applicant's knowledge of the Highway Traffic Act, the national safety code, labour legislation and vehicle maintenance plans and safe driver performance.

Among other requirements, the fitness test will require the applicant to have an acceptable past record of performance and require the filing of adequate plans for driver control and records, vehicle maintenance and records and control of hours of work.

Bill 152 will amend the Highway Traffic Act to introduce commercial vehicle operator's registration, or CVOR. This is a system to identify responsible individuals, collect all convictions,

monitor performance and support an improved system of sanctions against problem operators.

Yesterday the member for Algoma asked how we will ensure that carriers who are fit on entry remain so. CVOR and implementation of the national safety code provide the means to effect this. The national safety code is under development for application across Canada. It incorporates many safety elements already in place in Ontario, but adds hours-of-work standards, methods to enforce these and increased enforcement of vehicle safety standards. Implementation will require further amendments to the Highway Traffic Act, which will be introduced at another time later this year in advance of implementation of reforms.

1700

Last, we will be increasing our enforcement staff for on-highway enforcement and off-highway auditing of carrier records and vehicle maintenance, a concern raised by my friend the member for Lake Nipigon.

The second issue related to a concern for service to small communities. In 1982, early in the review process, the committee reviewing the present Public Commercial Vehicles Act requested a study of this. This study included discussion with users of transportation services in 24 communities in Ontario with populations of from 400 people to 8,000 people. This indicated that no negative impact would result from regulatory reform and that ease of entry would allow smaller, local, more responsive trucking firms to provide a better level of service in contrast to service now provided by larger carriers.

Many studies on this issue conducted following US deregulation dispelled the argument that small-town Americans suffered either unreasonable price increases or deteriorating service. Most communities in the United States reported that service had improved or, at worst, remained the same. In my discussions with the American Trucking Association and others in the United States some time ago, they confirmed that service had not declined in that country.

Trucking is generally less competitive in northern Ontario than in the south; therefore, the benefits of reform are expected to be more pronounced in the north, where the cost of transportation is much higher, resulting in higher consumer prices. Increased competition will help to lower consumer prices. With freedom to enter the market, more local trucking firms are expected to emerge, providing more appropriate service to smaller, remote northern Ontario

communities, thus creating job opportunities in the north. More open licences will allow carriers to obtain backhauls for goods originating in the north, resulting in a further reduction of transportation costs.

As my colleague the member for Timiskaming (Mr. Ramsay) outlined yesterday, these reforms are expected to be of particular benefit to northern Ontario, where transportation is such a large cost of doing business today. As the member for Kenora stated yesterday, mayors and reeves throughout the north have been promoting reforms since 1974. This is certainly consistent with what we have been hearing and what we have been told in our travels throughout the north since the introduction of this legislation.

The member for Mississauga East indicated that the certificate of competency was unworkable. The objective is to ensure that new interests have sufficient knowledge of applicable laws and safe operating practices, and there will be a particular emphasis on safety.

A study package to provide appropriate information to applicants is being developed and tested. Examination will be provided throughout Ontario at our driver examination centres. We do not see any problems with this. The matter of fine levels, also raised by my friend the member for Mississauga East, can be discussed during the detailed committee review.

Subsection 37(1) of the bill is not a veto power; it is simply a mechanism to allow the minister to request the Ontario Highway Transport Board to examine a policy issue through a public hearing process and to advise the minister. It does not affect individual applications. In fact, Bill 151 will give the OHTB the authority to hear appeals of its decisions, eliminating the present cabinet-petition appeal process. This change, we believe, will strengthen the independence of the board.

I appreciate the support of the member for Mississauga East for the public-interest test and wish to assure him it is not intended to be used extensively. The test is important, however, to ensure that in those few cases where detrimental public impact could result from approving an application, the mechanism is available to provide for public examination.

The advisory committee on trucking is not a senate. Members will be selected from various interest groups involved in or affected by the trucking industry. They will make recommendations on the effectiveness of the act and on whether the public-interest test should be continued beyond the initial five years. In addition, the committee can give me advice and make

recommendations on any matter concerning the efficient and safe transportation of goods in commercial vehicles.

The member for Lake Nipigon expressed concern for the justification of this bill. I mentioned the problems that exist today in my introductory remarks. The present legislation is of concern to all those involved in trucking. There has been broad participation in the search for solutions and in the formal review process that has resulted in Bill 150.

The Ontario trucking industry is basically in agreement, subject to some limited concerns. Labour's representatives have not raised a concern. Probably the greatest concern at present is within the shipping community, which wants less regulation than is currently being proposed. We have chosen reforms that can be managed and that include appropriate measures to ensure the adverse public impacts do not result.

The member for Lake Nipigon indicated potential job losses and quoted the US experience. The United States Department of Labour reports that between 1980 and 1985 employment in the US trucking industry increased by nearly 23 per cent overall, from some 1.3 million to some 1.6 million in rounded numbers. We anticipate increased competition will enhance Ontario's competitive position in national and international markets and will lead to job creation and greater job security for the very workers the member wishes to protect.

With respect to the contribution from the member for Etobicoke, I have only two comments. I would first like to remind him that this is 1987, not 1977. I found his personal comments related to my colleague to be totally unwarranted, uncalled for and not within the bounds of even the minimum level of dignity expected of members of this House.

The second point is with respect to the intervention from the member for Grey-Bruce (Mr. Sargent)—

Mr. Philip: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, a point of privilege: The minister has made an accusation without giving any specifics of the accusation.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Is it a point of privilege or a point of order?

Mr. Philip: It is a point of order. The minister has made accusations against me, saying I said something that was out of order about one of his colleagues. I ask the minister to put up or shut up. He should tell me specifically what I said that is so objectionable and that he seems to indicate is unparliamentary.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. What I heard the minister state was that the comments of the member for Etobicoke were not commensurate with the dignity of this place. I do not believe he specified what comments were stated. I do not believe that is an appropriate point of order.

Mr. Philip: The minister was imputing motives to the member for Etobicoke. I am saying that if he has specific instances where I have breached the propriety of this parliament, he should name those specific instances so that we can take a look at them.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr. Epp: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order: We have a clear difference of opinion with respect to this matter. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, you continue with the business at hand.

1710

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you. It is my ruling that the minister was not imputing motives, so that is not an appropriate point of order.

Mr. Philip: Is a sleazy attack such as the minister just made against me not imputing motives?

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The chair has made a ruling that he was not imputing motives; therefore, that is not an appropriate point of order. Minister, carry on.

Hon. Mr. Fulton: The second point is with respect to the intervention from the member for Grey-Bruce, my new parliamentary assistant and colleague. Far from arrogantly condemning the member for Grey-Bruce, the member for Etobicoke might have noted, as I did, the willingness of the member for Grey-Bruce to participate so readily and informatively in a complex debate.

This is not a blind following of the United States. The US is only now instituting some actions to ensure that highway safety does not deteriorate, actions already in place in Ontario. Other measures, such as public-interest tests, will provide us with a period of controlled transition before further reform is contemplated.

Members made frequent references to the 1977 report of the select committee on highway transportation of goods, and I acknowledge the excellent work done by that committee. However, we have to recognize that 10 years have passed. Starting in 1983 with the report of the Public Commercial Vehicles Act Review Committee, Responsible Trucking, a great deal of additional work has been done, involving all interested parties. Many of the recommendations

of the select committee have already been implemented. Many are included in these reforms, but others have been modified by work and consultation that has taken place since 1977.

We heard yesterday that in the experience of the US and other jurisdictions that have implemented deregulation, there has not been an increase in competition; on the contrary, mergers have resulted in a reduction in competition. In 1979, before US deregulation, there were, in round numbers, 17,000 carriers licensed by the Interstate Commerce Commission. By 1984, there were in excess of 30,000, almost twice as many carriers as before deregulation, hardly an indicator of less competition. There is no doubt that large less-than-truckload carriers have captured a greater share of the market, but there is still a wide range of service in price options.

We appreciate the concerns the member for Cornwall raised about the dump-truck operators in northern and eastern Ontario. I assure him we have had discussions with our colleagues from Quebec on the development of some compatible legislation in both provinces and we will continue to press for this. This problem exists today under the present legislation, but I do wish to give the member for Cornwall the assurance that we will continue to work towards the resolution of that issue.

With reference to the free trade in trucking by the member for Sault Ste. Marie, the issues he raised are largely with regard to Bill C-18 and Bill C-19. Transport or trucking is regulated by the federal Motor Vehicle Transport Act and is not contained in our proposals.

The member for Grey-Bruce and others have outlined some of the benefits of the bill before us. These include an improvement in truck safety in Ontario, stimulation of the Ontario economy, the enhancement of small business opportunities, maintenance of a dependable trucking industry, reduction of transportation costs, improved service for encouragement of new and innovative services and a smooth transition from the present to a less regulated environment.

In closing, I repeat that this bill is a result of extensive consultation during many years with all those involved in or directly affected by trucking. Participants' expectations are high that we now proceed with passage and implementation of reforms in order that the benefits expected can be realized.

The Deputy Speaker: In keeping with the government House leader's comment earlier, do we have unanimous consent that the recorded vote be deferred until 5:45 p.m.?

Agreed to.

ONTARIO HIGHWAY TRANSPORT BOARD AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Fulton moved second reading of Bill 151, An Act to amend the Ontario Highway Transport Board Act.

Hon. Mr. Fulton: The amendments to Bill 151 are required as a result of the changes brought about by the Truck Transportation Act. Under present legislation, all board decisions can be petitioned to cabinet. Cabinet does not have the right to refuse to consider a petition. As a result, this process has been abused, undermining the authority and independence of the board.

Through this amendment to the OHTB Act, the board will have the power to review decisions made by it in connection with the TTA. Upon appeal, the board chairman will consider the application. If the appeal is based on new evidence, he may order the hearing to be reopened. If the appeal is on the ground of an error in law, he may order a new panel to consider the appeal.

At one time, the board was very active in reviewing the performance of licensed-for-hire carriers. This process was considered beneficial in maintaining a responsible trucking industry. However, as a result of a court decision, the board was stripped of these powers. Through this amendment, the board will again be given the power to hold hearings, to review the performance of truck operators and to recommend disciplinary sanctions.

Mr. Gregory: I have a very quick comment. Because this is a companion piece to Bill 150 it is necessary that it go through at the same time, but I am just a touch confused by the explanation of the minister in answer to my question earlier or remarks yesterday, when I said it appeared that the cabinet would still retain power over the Ontario Highway Transport Board and could overturn decisions.

My reason for stating that is that under the heading Ministerial Directions to Investigate, subsection 37(1), it states: "The minister may direct the board to examine and investigate such matters relating to transportation policy as the minister specifies and the board shall report thereon to the minister."

My confusion here is understandable. On one hand, the Ontario Highway Transport Board has full control over these decisions; on the other hand, the cabinet has the right to direct the board on things it should be investigating and reviewing. I see a possible situation where the OHTB

makes a decision and perhaps it is even appealed, and after that being done, the cabinet can direct the board to review it again, unless I am misunderstanding the wording or it is not clear enough.

It is something that will have to be addressed in committee when we get there, because it certainly confuses me. That is not the most difficult thing in the world to do, but still and all, there is some question in my mind about whether the cabinet will have the right virtually to overturn by directing a board to re-examine something.

Board members being what they are, appointed by the cabinet, I expect that if they were asked to review a decision they had made, they might be inclined to assume that cabinet wanted them to reach a different decision. I am not saying they would do this. They are honourable men. One of them is sitting in the gallery, but I would not assume—

1720

An hon. member: And women.

Mr. Gregory: And women. Right. Thank you.

It puts too much pressure on them if cabinet can direct them to do that. I hope the minister will help me to understand that or clarify it in such a way that the confusion is not there. I do have a difficulty with that at present, and it is really the only difficulty I have with this bill. Once again, I assure the minister that this party will be voting for it. I also hope it will be referred to the standing committee.

M. Pouliot: Merci, Monsieur le Président. Vous vous souviendrez, bien sûr, des deux derniers jours, quand nous nous sommes engagés dans les débats qui ont suivi, pour nous pencher sur la deuxième lecture du projet de loi 150.

Bien sûr, nous du Nouveau Parti démocratique, en avons déjà conclu que les projets de loi 151 et 152 étaient des projets de loi connexes. C'est donc dire que ces projets de loi étaient directement liés et reliés au projet de loi majeur, et j'applique ici cette définition au projet de loi 150.

We have made sort of a tacit agreement. Over the past two days of debate, we have been favoured with the views of members of all parties. We have a good many supplementary comments that will apply to Bill 151 and Bill 52. In justice to the minister, however, we do recognize that they are merely housekeeping bills that will give sanction to and will police Bill 150 which is the crux of the matter or the major philosophy intended by the government.

We have done some work; in fact, we have done a great deal of work, not only on Bill 150 but also on the ramifications proposed by the government that will spill over from Bill 150 when it is implemented and the policing which comes in Bill 151 and Bill 152.

We reiterate that Bill 150 replaces a bill that is archaic. It has been in existence for some 50 years. Although it has had many amendments over the years, it has been unable to keep up with what a modern transportation system should be in Ontario. This has been acquiesced. I will conclude for the enefit of the minister that this party has never been opposed to change.

There have been some comments that I feel have been unfair. We have been favoured with extremism from some members of the party to the right. When I say the right, I do not mean in terms of philosophy. They try to adhere to a philosophy that is passé. They have been unfair inasmuch as they do not reflect—and I think it is by virtue and reason of people not taking the time to look at our policies.

Over the years, we have been the people who have advocated change. The present government has done very well over the past year and a half, but memory is not its forte nowadays. It has done extremely well by endorsing our policies.

Interjection.

Mr. Pouliot: I am not the one saying this. The polls will attest to that. Fortunately, we have a much better memory than some of the distinguished members across from us. How soon they forget.

When the minister talks about Bill 151, 152 and, if we come to yesterday and today, Bill 150, with great fanfare, he informs us that consultation was the order of the day. He said it again: consultation, but not with his colleagues in the third party nor with the major players in this affair, Canadian Pacific and Canadian National. The competitors have been omitted. Was it deliberate? Was it mere tactics on the part of the government so that it would be able to push what civil servants have been advocating for the past so many years?

The document does not lack imagination. It is somewhat innovative. The minister is to be commended. He has been bold. Unfortunately, the document does not contain the kind of substance that makes believers out of people who say, "Do not disrupt a system that needs some changes, agreed, but does not need an overhaul in its entirety from stem to stern."

The minister looks to the future with confidence, a sort of blind faith, really believing in the

premise or the philosophy that is the result of the beliefs of Conservatives and Liberals. There is no substance to that. There is chaos in the marketplace when you remove public convenience and necessity. When those are no longer conditions and when you replace the element of security and safety for the consumers in the general public with a fitness test, it becomes survival of the fittest. If you are fit, willing and able, you get to drive a truck. I say again that anyone who can breathe is allowed or even invited to attempt to drive anything that can roll.

The minister talks at great length about safety, yet nowhere in the proposal do we see a guarantee that safety will be improved. I know he means well. There is no one in this House who is not in favour of motherhood. There is no one in this House who does not realize that safety has to be maintained and improved.

It was not too long ago that the minister and I talked. We talked about the carnage—it is nothing short of that, and I choose my words carefully—that has been allowed to happen in northern Ontario where the road network system is nearly nonexistent and where maintenance has been handled in a very neglectful way at best.

I even went so far as to mention to the minister that if the same situation were to occur in southern Ontario, someone would surely suggest that someone else has blood on his hands. I am still waiting for an answer. We went so far as to propose a timetable. Again, we received no answer. The road network and the safety elements are directly related to the proposals under Bill 150 and the spilloff and enforcing bill, Bill 151.

It will lead to chaos unless the ministry can guarantee and can prove that it will not result in noncompensatory truckload rates, that the supply of trucks will not be limited, that deregulation, because that is what it is—I do not care what it is called; it is deregulation—will not result in poorer service and/or higher rates to small, outlying and remote communities; that deregulation will not impede technological development by loss of capital investment motives; that competition in the marketplace, which is the essence of the free-enterprise system, will not be removed so that cartels and monopolies will result. Takeovers and mergers will be more prominent; we have that assurance.

The minister has done nothing in his presentation to assure us this will not be the order of the day. The list of speakers on behalf of the New Democratic Party will attest to the seriousness of the proposed changes in the transportation

system. We are the first advocates of people's right to make a profit and to enter business, contrary to what some people believe. We encourage progress, but we are also the guardians. We need to safeguard a transportation system which, in all seriousness, has worked relatively well. It needs to be changed. It needs a lot of changes. It does not need overhauling without guarantees.

1730

Hon. Mr. Fulton: I wish to move second reading of Bill 152.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Morin): We are on Bill 151. Does the minister have any windup comments on Bill 151?

Hon. Mr. Fulton: No, I have no further comments on Bill 151.

The Acting Speaker: It is my understanding the vote will take place at 5:45 p.m.

Mr. McClellan: The bells will begin to ring at 5:45 p.m.

HIGHWAY TRAFFIC AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Fulton moved second reading of Bill 152, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act.

Hon. Mr. Fulton: This act will apply equally to buses, private and for-hire commercial vehicles and will complement the new Truck Transportation Act.

As I noted with Bill 150, we will be monitoring safety very closely. This will be achieved by using a system called the commercial vehicle operator's registration. Through CVOR, we can ensure that irresponsible operators will be identified and, if necessary, removed from our highways.

Under this system, all trucks on the road will be required to carry a copy of the operator's CVOR certificate. Convictions against the operator of the vehicle will then be registered on a computerized file. Convictions on the record will include all traffic and safety offences related to the operators, drivers, vehicles, accidents, dangerous-goods violations and overweight infractions, as well as convictions under the new Truck Transportation Act.

The carrier's performance will be monitored and, depending on the fleet's size, when a certain number of convictions are recorded, the operator will be subject to progressive discipline: a warning letter followed by an interview or, in extreme cases, loss of operating privileges on a temporary or permanent basis. CVOR will operate in a similar way with respect to operators as the demerit point system does for drivers.

A number of housekeeping items are included in this act to support the new Truck Transportation Act, such as imposition of civil liability on CVOR operators and making their drivers their agents for service of summonses to facilitate effective enforcement.

I want to stress my commitment and this government's commitment to highway safety. This is why, at the same time as we are reducing regulation of entry into the for-hire trucking industry, we are increasing the regulation of safety performance. These amendments to the Highway Traffic Act introduce CVOR, which is an essential component of the national safety code. This code has been developed by the provinces and is being implemented across Canada. Its purpose is to ensure an adequate level of truck and bus safety on our highways. The code, together with these amendments to the Highway Traffic Act, will improve our ability to control truck and bus safety.

The Acting Speaker: Are there any questions or comments to the minister? Are there any other members who wish to participate in this debate?

Mr. Gregory: Prior to that, if I may, the minister, in an earlier summation on another bill—which is relevant to this as we are treating them as a package—remarked that I said yesterday that the certificate of competency was unworkable. I do not think I said that. I wanted to stress that it had to be made totally workable; in other words, it had to be foolproof. I do not think I was criticizing the idea so much as the detail. I do not want the minister to misunderstand what I was saying. It requires a great deal of study to make sure it is foolproof. I was not throwing up my hands and saying, "You cannot make it work." The minister will get that kind of attitude from down the hall.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: You mean the party to the left.

Mr. Gregory: To the left, physically, psychologically and almost any other way one can think of.

Bill 152 is certainly a necessary addition to the introduction of Bill 150. I spent some time talking on that yesterday and outlined some of the fears people have on highways. Unfortunately, I gave some examples of bad driving habits of truck drivers. I should have spent some time talking about the good driving habits of the majority of truckers. Certainly, that goes without saying. Too often we forget to give a compliment where one is due. There are a great many very safe drivers on the highways. Unfortunately, the only ones one notices are those coming down the

highway much too quickly, passing other trucks. That sort of thing frightens one.

I hope Bill 152 is going to address itself to that as well as to safety inspections of trucks and to whether the driver is carrying his commercial vehicle operator's registration. If we can have some way of enforcing adherence to speed limits by truck drivers, that will certainly add to the comfort of drivers on the highway, other than truckers.

Our party will again be taking the minister at his word on second reading and will be supporting this bill. I expect we will get into extensive debate, clause by clause, after we have heard input from the Ontario Trucking Association and the various other bodies that might wish to come forward.

Whether it will be necessary for the committee to travel around Ontario, as was suggested by my colleague—

An hon. member: By truck.

Mr. Gregory: Right. We will get a big truck, a licensed bus or something, and can spend the winter in Thunder Bay. That is why they all get elected and come down here.

Anyway, we will be supporting the minister, and I hope my colleague the New Democratic critic is as good as his word that we will have the vote at 5:45 p.m.

1740

M. Pouliot: Je me rends compte qu'il sera bientôt 5h45. Donc, je serai très bref.

Encore, le projet de loi 152 porte sur la sécurité routière. Il a besoin de le faire puisque les propositions actuelles créeront un climat qui n'est pas propice au bon ordre sur nos routes.

Let us face it that when profits are being squeezed and companies are under pressure from larger trucking companies to turn in a profit, the first thing that will be cut in terms of cutting expenses to the bone may well be safety. It is a fact of life that tires will be expected to travel a few more miles. We must remind ourselves that the small operators will be surviving from hand to mouth, from trip to truck. Truck overhauling will not become the order of the day; it will be a luxury, not a necessity.

The ministry goes to great length to assure us that safety provisions will be part of Bill 152, but we are asking the minister to face the real fact of economic life. He is quite right to be somewhat apprehensive and to give us some guarantees, because the climate that is being created under Bill 150 will guarantee one thing—and I hope I am wrong—that he will have a safety problem on the roads of Ontario that he has never faced before;

so please be prepared. We are saying to the minister that there is the kind of preventive legislation that we are willing to support. He is suggesting something that may very well happen after the fact.

Hon. Mr. Fulton: I do not have any final comments, other than to say I have thoroughly enjoyed the extensive, exhaustive debate that has taken place here in the course of yesterday afternoon and this afternoon. I appreciate a number of the concerns raised, but I cannot understand the extreme of some of the other concerns raised.

However, this legislation has been pending in this Legislature for a great many years. We have done everything possible in a very open and consultative way to try to determine the best course of action for all sides of the industry affected by this legislation. As we indicated yesterday and today, we felt strongly that time was of the essence to move this issue forward.

I appreciate the supportive comments and I appreciate some of the less supportive comments from some members, who I think have at least provided constructive input into this debate. At some appropriate time today, I look forward to move that the three bills go to the standing committee on resources development for further public hearing and for input from members of this Legislature.

1755

TRUCK TRANSPORTATION ACT (continued)

The House divided on Hon. Mr. Fulton's motion for second reading of Bill 150, which was agreed to on the following vote:

Ayes

Andrewes, Bernier, Bossy, Bradley, Brandt, Callahan, Conway, Cordiano, Curling, Davis, Epp, Ferraro, Fish, Fontaine, Fulton, Gillies, Grandmaître, Gregory, Guindon, Haggerty, Hart, Henderson, Jackson, Kerrio, Keyes, Knight, Kwinter;

Lane, Lupusella, Mancini, McCague, McGuigan, McKessock, McNeil, Miller, G. I., Mitchell, Morin, Munro, Newman, Nixon, Offer, O'Neil, Peterson, Pierce, Pollock, Polsinelli, Ramsay, Rowe, Ruprecht, Sargent, Shepard, Smith, D. W., Smith, E. J., South, Stevenson, K. R., Taylor, Van Horne, Ville-neuve, Ward.

Nays

Breaugh, Bryden, Charlton, Cooke, D. S., Foulds, Gigantes, Grande, Grier, Johnston, R.

F., Laughren, Mackenzie, Martel, McClellan, Morin-Strom, Philip, Pouliot, Rae, Reville, Swart, Warner, Wildman.

Ayes 59; nays 21.

Bill ordered for standing committee on resources development.

ONTARIO HIGHWAY TRANSPORT BOARD AMENDMENT ACT

(continued)

The House divided on Hon. Mr. Fulton's motion for second reading of Bill 151, which was agreed to on the same vote.

Bill ordered for standing committee on resources development.

HIGHWAY TRAFFIC AMENDMENT ACT (continued)

The House divided on Hon. Mr. Fulton's motion for second reading of Bill 152, which was agreed to on the same vote.

Bill ordered for standing committee on resources development.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon. Mr. Nixon: There is some thought that perhaps the estimates of the Ministry of Housing might be completed a bit early, although they are intensely interesting, but we have had 97 hours now, and there may be an hour or two. In that case, we would like to continue with the bills currently in Orders and Notices.

The House adjourned at 6:03 p.m.

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Brandt, A. S. (Sarnia PC)
Callahan, R. V. (Brampton L)
Cooke, D. S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)
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Fulton, Hon. E., Minister of Transportation and Communications (Scarborough East L)
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Gregory, M. E. C. (Mississauga East PC)
Grier, R. A. (Lakeshore NDP)
Grossman, L. S. (St. Andrew-St. Patrick PC)
Guindon, L. B. (Cornwall PC)
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Morin, G. E., Deputy Chairman of the Committees of the Whole House and Acting Speaker (Carleton East L)
Morin-Strom, K. (Sault Ste. Marie NDP)
Nixon, Hon. R. F., Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Economics, Minister of Revenue and acting Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet (Brant-Oxford-Norfolk L)
Peterson, Hon. D. R., Premier and President of the Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of Northern Development and Mines (London Centre L)
Philip, E. T. (Etobicoke NDP)
Polsinelli, C. (Yorkview L)
Pope, A. W. (Cochrane South PC)
Pouliot, G. (Lake Nipigon NDP)
Rae, R. K. (York South NDP)
Rowe, W. E. (Simcoe Centre PC)
Shymko, Y. R. (High Park-Swansea PC)
Sterling, N. W. (Carleton-Grenville PC)
Swart, M. L. (Welland-Thorold NDP)
Treleaven, R. L., Deputy Speaker and Chairman of the Committees of the Whole House (Oxford PC)
Van Horne, Hon. R. G., Minister without Portfolio (London North L)
Warner, D. W. (Scarborough-Ellesmere NDP)



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Thursday, January 22, 1987

Speaker: Honourable H. A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday, January 22, 1987

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

ROLE OF PRIVATE MEMBERS

Mr. Henderson moved resolution 76:

That in the opinion of this House,

Recognizing that representative democracy is a form of government in which ultimate power is retained by the people and exercised through a system of representation and delegated authority;

Recognizing that the McGrath committee, through its Report of the Special Committee on Reform of the House of Commons (Canada), has argued that a reasonable latitude consistent with loyalty to a party, including the freedom to reject or amend legislation, should be exercised by individual government and opposition members, and has observed that defeat of a government bill or motion may, if necessary, be followed by a vote of confidence to sustain a government; and

Recognizing the beneficial effects of divergent viewpoints among elected members of political parties in the legislatures of other jurisdictions, such as the British House of Commons, and the beneficial early effects of the McGrath committee recommendations on the Canadian House of Commons;

Therefore, in order to facilitate constructive reform of the Legislature, this House,

1. supports in principle the reforms proposed by the McGrath committee;

2. affirms the McGrath committee's view that divergence of viewpoint among members of a particular party can convey strength, maturity and sensitivity;

3. affirms that private members should exercise a measure of independent judgement consistent with loyalty to their party's principles in speaking and voting according to conscience; and

4. asks the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly to undertake a comprehensive study and report back to the House concerning the desirability and feasibility of reforms, including those proposed by the McGrath committee, in order to strengthen the role of private members and of standing committees of the Legislature.

The Deputy Speaker: The honourable member has up to 20 minutes for his presentation and he may reserve any portion of it for the windup.

Mr. Henderson: I shall speak for about 15 minutes now.

Members of the Legislature should be more assertive lest they look too much like hired guns and rented lovers. Legislators have a three-way accountability: to constituents, to parties and to conscience. There is little inherently and necessarily adversarial in what we do. We all represent different constituencies. Few of us will ever run against each other. A greater sense of individual accountability to constituents, principles and conscience would promote a more constructive tone to legislative work. Legislators, too, in a democracy have free speech.

According to a recent Environics poll, only 42 per cent of Canadians believe their legislators to be honest and sincere; 12 per cent more than 16 months ago believe their elected representatives are less than honest and sincere; 75 per cent believe Canada's political system needs reform—and people claim that doctors have an image problem.

Wringing our hands about the decorum of question period does not help, but private members can work change in the legislative process. We need a heightened sense of individual accountability and a pulling away from partisan rhetoric, display and groupthink. We should be colleagues first and rivals second.

Many of us have felt pressed, sometimes vigorously, not to bring our own particular experience and views, sometimes views well honed in the crucible of hard experience, to complex legislative issues. The McGrath Special Committee on Reform of the House of Commons called that process intimidation.

"Intimidation" is a strong word. We can all agree that only parties other than our own would ever resort to anything such as that, but maybe we could also agree that feelings of intimidation are not uncommon. That type of pressure we all know of does not belong in democratic parties in a democratic Legislature. Representative democracy asks for more. All legislators are elected to represent constituents in this assembly. To be sure, we all belong to parties rich and noble in

traditions. All of us identify ourselves with important political principles. We are proud of our parties. No one of us would lightly or carelessly argue or vote in a way that differed from that of the majority of our colleagues. No one wants to cause his friends embarrassment.

That is not the issue. We cannot exercise our mandates as legislators unless we feel free to speak and even vote our minds when we tell ourselves, in conscience or in principle, that we must. What else are democratic safeguards for?

Speaking personally, I have made no secret of my struggle on Bill 94. Some members did not share my point of view. In this present context, that is not important to me, for none of us demands to have our way, but all of us should demand to have our point of view well heard.

What matters is the process. What matters is that the viewpoints, right or wrong, and proposals, wise or not, when they are based on knowledge, training, experience, thought and close familiarity, belong in the deliberations of this assembly. We saw that here just a few weeks ago with the debate and vote on Bill 7. Those who would censure such divergencies bring viewpoints I cannot condone. The more vigorous the censure, the more vigorously we must defend our freedoms as legislators. We all know divergent views exist in every healthy party. Is it really so embarrassing that we hear them? I want to hear them. I argue for a strengthening, not a relaxation, of the democratic disciplines of responsible representation and rational debate.

Educators in Ontario should feel proud of our example for their class decorum and not embarrassed to expose us to their classes' view. A shift in attitude is overdue. The experience of other jurisdictions gives us some encouragement. Members of the British House of Commons speak quite freely and quite publicly against the views of one another and their parties. Between 1972 and 1979, there were 65 defeats of government measures in the British House. So much for the claim that the British parliamentary tradition requires that members always vote on party lines.

1010

In Canada, the minority government of Pierre Trudeau lost eight votes between 1972 and 1974, and Lester Pearson's minority governments lost three. American legislators exercise almost total freedom, perhaps too much; they become too vulnerable. Let us seek a better middle ground in Ontario.

Very clearly, governments do not fall and legislatures do not become unworkable when the

executive bows to the wishes of the House on a wide variety of measures and under a wide variety of circumstances. If necessary, a government can simply call a vote of confidence to sustain its mandate. The only reason for embarrassment would be if the government had failed to bring the bill to its caucus to learn of its own supporters' views.

The greatest embarrassment, it seems to me, should be the travesty of democracy in apparent unanimity based on enforced grouping. People doing what they are told are not involved in democratic government. Discipline that does not respect rational evaluation and discussion of alternatives in our caucuses and in our Legislature is no discipline at all in democracy. Agreement is not agreement if not freely given. Reasoned voices of constructive dissent are a matter for caucus pride, not for embarrassment.

The course I urge that we follow would be no easy road. We have all sometimes hidden behind our parties on unpopular matters or votes. Incidentally, one of the reforms, it seems to me, addresses the fate of private members' bills and resolutions that succeed. We sometimes take the easy road on those because, although they represent the will of an elected legislative body, we know they will mostly wither on the vine. Why should certain acts of an entire democratically elected body have less authority than others or be subjected to screening and censorship by a few? If we let that happen, what is to stop the growth of unchecked power?

All of our political ideologies favour such change. Liberalism boasts commitment to reform and favours greater freedom in political institutions. Conservatism argues for the upholding and strengthening of historic democratic traditions and institutions of parliament. Tories often speak for liberty and conscience. Democratic socialism advocates the emancipation of individuals from institutions that bind their creativity and freedom, and wisely so. I share that advocacy and I know it well. All these ideologies can never work unless elected legislators are truly free.

I know my New Democrat colleagues have a tradition of strong loyalty to party policy, and I respect that. The wording of my resolution deliberately respects that tradition because I hope New Democrats can support the general principle of reform for a greater democracy and a stronger role for our committees and that they will support this resolution even if they do not agree with everything I say about it.

The McGrath Special Committee on Reform of Canada's House of Commons took the view that rigid party discipline is not compatible with the philosophy of the democratic political party. Canadian politics, it says, has become too dominated by the ethic of party solidarity. The committee asked that parties, whips and leaders change their attitudes and urged that private members take the lead by changing theirs.

The McGrath committee urged that in the normal exercise of legislative duties, government members should feel free to amend or defeat clauses in bills, make amendments to bills, reduce estimates as a mark of disapproval, concur in committee reports critical of government and reject proposed legislation outright or oppose amendments.

The committee urged governments to let their supporters know that unquestioned obedience to the ministerial line is not the only route to advancement in the party. Private members, according to McGrath, must once again become the instruments through which citizens contribute to shaping the laws under which they live. The House of Commons has adopted many of the McGrath reforms, and committees of the Commons have since become much stronger and more democratic.

Just to show that I do not quote only Tories, here is what Don Johnston had to say about it: "Party discipline has greatly eroded the value of the House of Commons... Good MPs with independent views on public policy are stifled if their positions conflict with those of the cabinet." Since no persuasive argument is going to change the votes of members of the ruling party, opposition views are equally at risk of disregard, or perhaps more at risk. Public opinion registered in polls has greater influence on government than the views of elected members. Those are quotations or paraphrasings from Don Johnston.

This minority Legislature provides a most opportune moment. Johnston goes on to note that majority government has no incentive to reduce party discipline, despite the deleterious effect it is having on the House of Commons, the morale of its members and the perception of the public. Parliamentary reform likely will focus on mechanics rather than on substance, while my resolution focuses on substance, and the time to act is now.

Johnston calls for a real assault on the convention of discipline. He says that if members were free to exercise their own judgement, to propose their own policies, to build coalitions and counterpolicies put forward by the leader-

ship, it is probable that elections would focus more on the merits of the individual member and less on party leaders. "The pursuit of power," he says, "comes quickly into conflict with democratic ideas."

I argue here that governments should lead by leading less, and oppositions surely gather credibility when the opposition is focused, reasoned, selective and therefore presumably not predictable. A leader stands very tall when he encourages his followers to follow principle and judgement. Rigid party so-called discipline is discipline in name. Disciplined democracy requires something more.

Electors might be surprised to know how little their elected representatives feel really free to represent their views, much less how influential they feel they can really be in shaping legislative policy when they do. An influential member of my party once argued that British parliamentary tradition requires voting along party lines. It absolutely does not.

I urge reform, reform of attitude as well as of practice, in three areas.

First, we should expand the authority and freedom of legislative committees, tenure their members, much reduce the influence of party whips in committees, ensure that voices of real democratic representation are brought to bear on committee work and try to bring a more constructive and collaborative quality to committee discussions.

Committees are at risk of becoming playing fields for interparty partisan struggles that have little to do with the real work of democratic government. Committee members are at risk of becoming pawns on a giant chessboard. Committees should match by name government ministries and perhaps departments, be slightly smaller in size and should not include parliamentary assistants naturally loyal to their respective ministries. They should have a role in the drafting of certain legislation, the scrutiny of order-in-council appointments and the drafting of regulations under bills.

Second, we should restore the authority and autonomy of private members. Their first role is to represent the views of their constituents according to their principles and their consciences, not to be spokespersons for parties or for party whips and leaders. Representative democracy demands no less. Political power always seeks to increase itself. So-called party discipline always contains the risk of serious miscarriage of representation in democracy.

Third, except in emergencies, no bill should be brought before the Legislature without at least an opportunity for caucus discussion, and perhaps sometimes committee discussion, by elected representatives responsive to constituents.

Liberal ideology urges constructive reform and greater freedom in political institutions. I will concede that we have no monopoly on either virtue, but I do invite all members to join with me in reaffirming our commitment to representative democracy and to show that free speech lives and thrives with Ontario legislators of all three major parties.

Those of us who have argued a personal view in this Legislature know just how tough it is. We have felt the heat. I am not about to be deterred by that. I have even felt occasionally a little reassured by Winston Churchill's famous quip, "Nothing in life is so exhilarating as to be shot at without result."

I will stop momentarily with another quotation, this one from Teddy Roosevelt, who said:

"The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood—who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, who spends himself in a worthy cause. Who at best knows in the end the triumphs of high achievement, and if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat."

The Deputy Speaker: The member has reserved four minutes and 35 seconds for his wrapup.

1020

Mr. Sterling: First, I want to congratulate the member for Humber (Mr. Henderson) for bringing forward this resolution. The member has come to a point of view that I hold, but I have come to that position only after a much longer experience in the political field.

What the member is placing before the Legislature today is a question of who really governs this place. Do the electors who elect their MPP every four or five years or after whatever time expect that their MPP will really govern what happens in the Legislature and vote according to what his constituents might want him to do?

As an engineer, I learned that the stability in our physical environment results from a series of natural laws. Those laws allow us to live as humans here on earth, but we must be careful not to upset that delicate balance dictated by those natural pushes and pulls that are associated with physical and chemical equations. Parliament is

much the same. Whereas in our physical world survival of the human species is the goal, in parliament our goal is to provide a system of government that is responsible to its citizens, who freely chose their governors.

We make the rules to run our houses of parliament, which should provide the necessary balance of power to reach our democratic ideals and goals. The execution of those rules is determined by us, the politicians, our advisers, the bureaucrats and the media. In Canada, we still have the same basic set of rules striking the balance of power that we had some 50 years ago. However, over those 50 years, there has been a tremendous increase in the involvement and complexity of government. The 20-second news clip for television has taken the place of the objective, reasoned article in the printed press.

Most important of all has been the changing role of the politician himself. As recently as the early 1960s, the legislative session sat for a short six weeks. The member's salary was really an honorarium. To exemplify the difference, in 1965 the Attorney General of Ontario continued to carry on his private law practice back home on the weekends while he held the very same position as Attorney General.

Now politics and the Legislature are full-time jobs. If one loses an election, one could have a difficult time re-entering the private world of work. This has led politicians to become less independent and concerned about long-time survival. If you fall into line and remain loyal to the party, you could become a cabinet minister if you are on the government side. You could become a critic of an important portfolio if you are on the opposition side. This improves not only one's political stature but also one's financial stature by as much as 40 per cent. Fall out of favour and not only do you risk your political future, but you could also risk the financial security of your family as well.

How does the balance of power work in our Legislature today? This can be measured by the requirement or obligation on one part of the system to justify its position to the other part of the system and to the public. Does the Premier feel obligated to sell his cabinet on his point of view on an issue? Will a cabinet member listen seriously to the suggestions of his caucus? Will a cabinet minister answer directly a question placed to him in this Legislature, and will he listen seriously and thoughtfully to debate in this Legislature? Will the media report on meaningful debate so that the government must also listen to that debate?

My experience and the experience of others has been that there are few instances where the cabinet has to justify its actions to this Legislature. Further, and perhaps even more distasteful, the head of government need not justify his position to his cabinet.

Let me illustrate this point further. We learn from Donald Johnston's book, *Up the Hill*, of the federal government's unexpected and expensive acquisition of Petrofina in 1981. He writes: "I was dumfounded: A commitment of that magnitude made without any advance notice to ministers, especially the President of Treasury Board? 'Good Lord,' I thought. 'Are my views irrelevant? Does the cabinet no longer count?'"

Perhaps the most flagrant use of this power in the Ontario government came on June 12, 1984, when the Progressive Conservative cabinet was told at 11 a.m. that Mr. Davis was going to announce at two o'clock that afternoon the extension of funding to separate schools. It was not a proposal. No cabinet submission was ever presented. It was an order. It was clear that little discussion would be tolerated. A similar charade took place in the Progressive Conservative caucus about 1 p.m. prior to the 2 p.m. announcement in the Legislature.

The other decision that took place in the Ontario cabinet with little consultation related to the government's purchase of an interest in Suncor. Few facts were presented and there was little discussion at the cabinet level.

I would like to make it clear that I am not commenting on the Peterson government, but my experience and the experience of others proves that the raw power is in fact there and in the hands of the Premier if he chooses to exercise it.

My answer to the question of who rules is that it is neither the members of this Legislature nor the critics. It is the Premier of the province who rules and rules alone, and the leaders of the party to a minor degree.

How can we change and rebalance the system so that we in truth have some indicia of democracy here in the Legislature? The member for Humber has proposed a certain number of changes to our written rules. I suggest that it is necessary to change not only the written rules but also the chemistry of what happens between each and every one of us in this Legislature, including my relationship with my leader, my relationship with the Premier and the relationships of government members with the Premier.

I am going to suggest some very radical things that I would like to see changed as well as supporting what the member for Humber is

putting forward. I would like to remove the Premier's absolute control over the financial wellbeing of every member of this Legislature. I believe that every member of this Legislature, whether he is a cabinet minister, a parliamentary assistant, the head of a committee or a member of the opposition, should be paid the exact same dollars. Therefore, people seeking to become cabinet ministers, seeking a higher position in their party, seeking to become leader of their party would seek those positions on a matter of principle alone and they would not feel financially compelled to stay in a position if they differed with a policy of the Premier or of the leader of their party.

I would like to see another move towards the US style of government in terms of a member of this Legislature being able to put forward a bill and have it seriously considered before this Legislature. I need only refer to the bill that I have in front of this Legislature, Bill 71, the Non-Smokers' Protection Act, of which I know the Deputy Speaker is an avid supporter. I can ask questions in this Legislature, and I have the majority support of this Legislature, but will it become law?

I encourage the media to strengthen the hand of the individual members of the Legislature. If one member stands up and differs with his party, the media need not criticize the political party from where he comes. They should look thoughtfully to what that member says.

Last, I put forward the suggestion that there be a time limitation on how long any individual can serve as Premier. I believe we not only must follow the lead of the member for Humber but must also make some dramatic changes in how we interact with each other to make this a more meaningful place and to make people understand that this is a democracy and that their members can speak for them in a meaningful way.

1030

Mr. Breaugh: It will come as no surprise to anybody that I am in support of the resolution. We have been attempting to bring about this type of reform in this Legislature for a long time. Committee reports that I have been associated with have addressed themselves to standing orders, the rules of procedure here and the way committees function. For a long time, I personally have advocated, as have a number of members, a change in the process. To categorize it as a revolutionary change would be nonsensical; no one here wants that.

Most of us are advocates of the parliamentary process. I would like to see the parliamentary

process developed along our own model. There are many who quote the traditions of Westminster. One of the shocks one gets when one visits the House of Commons at Westminster is that it is nothing like the mythology that is spread around Canada. It is a huge place, with 635 members.

The party discipline that is rammed down everybody's throat here is virtually nonexistent there. There they have a voting hall off to the side of the chamber. The role of the whips is to stand there to make sure they can push, shove, argue or cajole enough of the members of their own party into the right voting hall in order to carry the day, but it does not always work. Even Margaret Thatcher, bless her little heart, has wet and dry Tories. I do not know the difference between a wet Tory and a dry Tory, but there are two camps in her own caucus. Most of the members do not attend, so in reality the business is carried on by probably about 20 per cent of the members at Westminster.

The existence of political parties is a relatively new phenomenon at Westminster. Only in this century have they had much of a foothold. There is much blathering in Canadian politics that we must uphold the traditions of Westminster. Unfortunately, most of this blathering is carried on by people who have never been there and who do not even know what happens at Westminster.

Some people advocate an Americanization to the process, which is almost a total abdication of party identity let alone following along party lines. There is none. When I went to Washington, I asked some Democrats how they caucus on matters and how they meet as Democrats and decide what to do. I was shocked when they said, "We do not do that." The Democratic Party never has had a caucus. They never meet. All the Democrats do not go into one room at one time and decide on what to do. However, they have a black caucus. Republicans and Democrats who happen to be black or are interested in black issues will meet to decide a strategy. People who are farmers will gather together from either party. In fact, they move back and forth from one party to the other with ease, because there is very little ideology involved. It is kind of who is in and who is out.

In many respects, people say there is too much division along party lines. I believe we have to get serious about this. I am a New Democrat, not because I think the New Democratic Party is perfect or because I think it is correct on every matter. It certainly is not, and cannot be; if it were, we would have no need for an Ontario

provincial council or for party conventions to set policy.

We argue among ourselves on what is the best way to voice a policy. We argue among ourselves on what is the best strategy to put that in front of the people of Ontario. We argue about strategy on how to present it in the Legislature and on the hustings during an election. Every political party does that. There is not a mindset which removes your total brain when you join a political party. You retain a strong personal point of view and you express it at every occasion. You win some and you lose some.

Party politics means to me that, on a broad range of issues, I belong with the New Democrats. Sometimes I think they are nuts; sometimes I think they are absolute jerks. I very often say so. The leader's office gets phone calls saying how terrible I am; I should not say those things in public.

I have many faults, the largest of which I will not go into. One of the minor ones I have is that I do not take orders well. I never have, and at this stage in my life I never will. I do not take commands. I would be a very poor foot soldier in anybody's army. I would be an even worse general. That is me. You can like it, you can lump it, you can do whatever you want with it, but you will have to contend with it if you have any association with me. Just get used to it.

I had been here about two weeks when I ran afoul of Stephen Lewis. It took me only about five years to recover from that little gaffe, but I did. Death does not follow when you disobey your leader's call. You live with aggravation. People do not like you very well; they isolate you a bit. You will not be promoted very quickly, but this is not really of much concern to me.

Some day I will lose an election. It will probably happen to me, as it happens to most members. The world will not cease should that tragic event occur, nor will I. I quit teaching at a time when I was just beginning to get into a salary range that gave my family some comforts. I have paid a bitter price for that. Every time the teachers settle a contract back home, my wife brings it in and puts it on the kitchen table, and I live with another few days of grief about that decision. But the world did not end. It goes on, and when my time as a member of the Legislature is over, it will be just fine by me too. There will be something else for me to do, something else I want to do.

For those who are motivated by what we might laughingly call the prestige of being a member of the assembly, it really is not that much. You have

a chance to do some things for some people. You win some battles and you lose some battles. So what? That is life; that is the parliamentary process.

I am an advocate of the parliamentary process, of most of what Jim McGrath and his committee had to say. My committee had a chance to meet with them on several occasions. I have no illusions that we are all going to strike off in different directions. In fact, what I would be content with is quite modest. I would like our committees to have more latitude to do what they want to do. I would like them to have more resources at their disposal.

I think there is a lot of talent in this chamber. I do not agree with a lot of it, but I grant that there is ability on all sides, and we ought to find a way to utilize that ability. I grant very quickly that if I find I vote against my own party more times than I vote with it, I am in the wrong party; that is obvious. But it should not be a sin, and it is not a sin, in my view, to vote against it.

Most of the time my arguments are not about principles but about strategy. Are we presenting this in the right way? Is this the right thing to do now? So what? I have no problem with that if the majority of my caucus wants to do something in a different way.

I have often said that if you wanted to provide a real look at Ontario politics, your first priority would be not to televise the proceedings of the assembly in the chamber but to televise the Tuesday morning caucus meetings. I know this is too much violence for the public to see, and the language is not parliamentary, but if you wanted to see Ontario politics where it really is at, all the crunching that goes on, you would televise the caucus meetings.

The truth is that in all the caucuses, on almost every piece of legislation and every idea brought forward, it is rare to walk in and get unanimous consent from your own caucus. There is an argument there, and usually a very good one—powerful, blunt, sometimes vicious—but that is where it is hammered out. Then you come out and present to the public a slightly more polished form of that.

I do not think there is a problem. I do not think the world would end if we decided that free votes were not the order of the day but were an acceptable way to proceed. I believe they are. I believe they happen whether you like them or not. I do not think it would be wrong—in fact, I think it would be quite right—if we found more vehicles for individual members to do something on their own.

1040

In this parliament, more private members' bills have become law than in any other parliament to date. There were three to be exact. That is not exactly earth-shaking. I would not see anything wrong with letting that process proceed a bit further as well. I believe that would be very useful and very constructive.

In fact, going back to the British Parliament, much of what is controversial in British law came about by means of private members. The political parties did not have the guts to do these things, so they said: "Find some stupid sucker who will move a motion like this and we will all get behind it. If it works out, fine, we will all take credit, and if it is wrong, we will say we did not know what the jerk wanted to do." British law is full of things that came about because one individual had the temerity to take the initiative.

Although this motion is perhaps a little on the pious side, to me it speaks to what politics is all about. It is not about always agreeing with one's party. It is not about always being right or wrong either. It is simply about human beings trying to do the best they can for other folks around them. We are not indispensable. It is not an end in itself.

If, at the end of my lifetime, the best I can do is say I was a member of the Ontario Legislature for a long time, then I have not done very much. If I have been able to help a few folks along the line, that gives me some credit. I never really worry whether my leader likes what I did today or what my party approves of, but at the end of each day, what I worry about is whether I approve of it. I learned that lesson a long time ago. If at least that one person is satisfied with my performance that day, I am happy.

Ms. Hart: Although I find myself to be in uncharacteristic sympathy with the views of the member for Oshawa (Mr. Breagh), I rise to speak against the resolution presented by the member for Humber.

The parliamentary system, as it is currently exercised in this province, in my view, serves us well. It is not a perfect system. We will not be able to come up with a perfect system. In fact, human beings will never be able to do that. It is a compromise that brings us the best decisions for the most people. I feel strongly about this, perhaps because I have had quite a bit of experience with the US system of brokerage and pork-barrel politics.

One of the prime reasons our system works as it is today is that governments are elected on policy platforms. We go out and campaign on

those policies. The elected private members must be able to defend those policies. Otherwise, why would we choose that party in the first place? The voters vote for those platforms. They will not agree with every policy in the platform, but they evaluate the basket of policies and decide which party or which individual they can best live with as their representative in the Legislature. Voters expect those promises that came from the policies of each party to be kept. We hear great uproars if they are not kept.

I would also like to draw to the attention of the House that the policies do not come out of the air. Each party goes through a process of developing policies. The process involves the private members. If a private member disagrees with a policy once it has been enunciated and is public, in my view, that member did not do his homework when the policy was being developed. Each member can participate in any party, if he wishes. The only one I know about is my party, but I can view the parties opposite and I am sure each of the members has some say in what goes on and what is finally enunciated as a policy of his party.

It is at the early stages of the policy development that a private member's views are perhaps most strongly felt. At those stages, nobody is entirely sure how the policy will end up. We all have policy conferences. We all talk to our constituents, or at least I hope we do. We all have riding associations where we talk to the people there. These policies do not come out of the air. For us to stand up in this House once there has been a policy enunciated and made public and say, "Oh, I guess I do not really agree with that" is an abrogation of our responsibility at early stages.

If a government has enunciated a policy and cannot carry through with that policy, what are the electors to think? That this government cannot govern or that this opposition party cannot oppose and do its job is the obvious conclusion. In my view, our system as it is today enables the governing to take place. It enables unpopular decisions to be made. It enables us to avoid government by poll which, as we have seen, is not exactly the best way of dealing with the complex problems in this province.

It is true that when we get to the next election, the voters can turf out the government if promises have not been kept or if its policies cannot be implemented, but very often that is a four-year period. It seems to me that we are much more consistent and much more representative in acting on our policies and in carrying through

with those policies during the term of our mandate.

Frankly, I am a little insulted by hearing that private members' views are currently muzzled and that we are not independent thinkers under our current system. I think of myself as an independent thinker, as I am sure everyone in this House does. The only difference in the way I think about how policy should be enunciated is that I think my views are best felt in caucus.

The member for Oshawa referred to his caucus and said he does not like to be ordered around. I do not like to be ordered around either. I am sure none of us does. I know that in our caucus every one of us has a chance to be heard, and I am sure that is true in all caucuses. That is the mechanism in our system under which our views are felt and heard. Each cabinet minister must bring to the government caucus policy initiatives and legislation. All of those things must be brought to caucus a number of times and each member can express his views. Virtually every caucus that I have attended has resulted in changes in policy initiatives or in legislation as the result of the views expressed by ordinary members.

Mr. Martel: She is the oldest young Liberal here.

Ms. Hart: My friend opposite is referring perhaps to a young fogey. I accept that kudos.

I have perhaps not been here long, but I have seen that caucus works. I would like to stand up and say strongly I am in favour of that system of caucus. Once we have come to a consensual view in caucus, we then stand up and defend the view of our party and, in my case, of my government. If each of us worked for individual stardom, the system would break down. We have a perfect example of how the system has broken down south of the border.

The trouble with that system is that tough decisions cannot be made. I use a couple of examples. One is the acid-rain issue. We know how tough it is for the Americans to get together and say, "Acid rain is a problem and we are going to do something about it." The reason it is so tough is that there are individual legislators who are virtually totally financed by special interests whose interests are against doing anything about acid rain and against controlling pollution.

We know campaigns are very expensive in the United States, much more expensive than they are here. In order to raise those millions of dollars, legislators, in the border states particularly, must be dependent on the big manufacturers, such as manufacturers of steel and other factories that cause a lot of pollution but people

who give a lot of money to the campaigns of these legislators. I think it could be fairly said that those legislators are assumed to be the spokespeople for those industries. Consequently, legislation which is good not only for Canada but also for all the people of the United States cannot be passed. They are hidebound in their special interests.

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Another example is gun control. Every time the issue is raised in the United States, individual members are lobbied hard by the gun interests. I suspect we will never ever see gun-control legislation in the United States, because the legislators are absolutely tied up by special interests, the interests with the most money.

I like to think that in Ontario money is not the only thing that talks. One may call it protection, but as individual members we come to a decision about the best policy to go forward with and then we get up and defend that policy. There will always be a range of viewpoints within our caucus. My colleague the member for Oshawa mentioned that there was a range of viewpoints in his caucus. Mine is no different.

We are able to live with that range. We work it out in caucus. We may fight about it but we come to a conclusion, a consensus that we can all live with. In my view and experience, that kind of consensus is perhaps the best kind of policy decision we can come to in a province with so many regions and different interests to be represented. This is a province with many complexities, many more perhaps than the province where I was born, Nova Scotia, which is much smaller. There are many regions with different needs. We need a system that makes sure all those needs are brought to the table and that our policies are representative of all those needs.

Mr. Shymko: It is ironic that we are discussing a resolution whose intent is to protect the rights, privileges and very foundation of the parliamentary system of the individual members of this Legislature. I do not think there has ever been a debate in this Legislature on this topic. I compliment the member for Humber for introducing it. What an irony that here we are discussing a bill which will give us powers as individual members of the Legislature and there are only 15 members present. That is the first irony.

Interjections.

Mr. Shymko: With the respect I will accord my honourable colleague when he will speak for

the few minutes he will be allowed—and I will refer to that—I will appreciate not having any interruptions. I certainly will not interrupt his remarks.

The second irony is that some remarks are being made about why the member for York East (Ms. Hart) takes an opposing view. That is precisely what we have been fighting for. I respect her differing view, differing with that of her colleague in her own party. That is what we are talking about. I respect that. At the same time, I agree with the member for Sudbury East (Mr. Martel) that, given time, she will realize the resolution is not addressing the elimination of the party system. That is ingrained. It has been here, it is here and it will continue to be here.

I think the member is advocating the elimination of the pretence, the hypocrisy, of even having a private members' hour on Thursday morning—in the past we have had it at different times—because there is no private members' hour. To give an example of the time allocation, I remember trying to speak on a nuclear arms free zone; I had barely 60 seconds to express a view that was somehow different from others. This is what we call equal time for democratic views. I am concerned that the member for Sudbury East, for example, cannot participate equally with the other parties in joining his colleague the member for Oshawa so that we have two speakers from the New Democratic Party, two from the official opposition and two from the Liberal Party.

The way the setup is made, we cannot have equal time. That has to be amended. I understand from the member for Oshawa, who is the chairman of a committee on the Legislative Assembly, that changes will be made, but I remind members, as the member for Oshawa has pointed out, of the glaring hypocrisy that barely two or three private members' bills have been passed, because the governing party controls the agenda. We will have unanimous consent on second reading because politics is 95 per cent perception and five per cent content.

One has to be careful with the voters when one discusses the heritage language bill, Bill 80; therefore, unanimous consent is given on it, but will Bill 80 ever come up for third reading? Never. Will my bill on labelling, which was passed with unanimous consent, ever see daylight as a law? Never. Will the bill from the member for Carleton-Grenville (Mr. Sterling), Bill 71, ever become law? Never, because there is a party structure that controls the agenda.

I refer to the fourth point of the resolution, to strengthen the role of private members. I would

like to see a resolution that when a private member's bill or a private bill is introduced in a session in the Legislative Assembly and either receives unanimous consent on second reading or wins by whatever split there is on second reading, that bill should go to third reading. It must go to third reading. Let us stop playing the game of hypocrisy that we respect private members' hour. The government should eliminate private members' hour and not pretend.

I would like to have the attention of the member for York East. When I was elected in 1981, I presented a resolution that was watered down. There were meetings with the then Premier, and I had to be careful not to upset the status quo. In my resolution, presented during private members' hour in June 1982, I promoted the establishment of a day care centre in the Queen's Park complex for the children of working women. The Premier at the time was the Honourable Bill Davis. We were a majority party. I would like the honourable member to listen to this.

We had a majority, yet I remember in caucus the Premier came in and all he had to say was, "Back Yuri on this resolution and we will have a day care centre." No. The answer was a free vote. I had hoped and prayed that the members opposite, the New Democratic Party and the Liberal Party, in the spirit of nonpartisanship on an issue that was nonpartisan, would give me support, but no. Marching orders went out to the Liberal Party, then in opposition, and to the NDP, "Defeat Yuri's resolution." There was not one vote of support from the other side, and my resolution was defeated. That was my first lesson.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Morin): Your time has expired.

Mr. Shymko: I support this resolution. I would like to speak at length on this, but my time has expired.

Mr. Henderson: Does the member for Sudbury East not get any time at all?

The Acting Speaker: There are four minutes and 30 seconds remaining.

Mr. Henderson: Can I give him a minute?

The Acting Speaker: No, you cannot.

Mr. Henderson: The intent was there.

The Acting Speaker: If the member for High Park-Swansea (Mr. Shymko) wanted that time, you would be allowed to do it for him, but you cannot pass it on to the next speaker. Therefore, this is your choice.

Mr. Henderson: I feel badly about that because I would dearly like to hear what the member for Sudbury East has to say.

Mr. Breagh: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent that the member for Sudbury East be given one minute.

Mr. Shymko: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker: Is it agreed?

Agreed.

Mr. Martel: I merely rise to say there is more in this House than legislation. The role of a back-bencher in a majority government is out of existence. He might as well go home. In a minority government, he has a little say.

There is more than legislation. Members should take a look at the time there is for legislation, a couple of days a week. Everything else is something different. Estimates time is a waste of time. Let us put something in its place that gives the member the role of doing something useful.

My colleague summed it up well. He said there is a lot of ability here. There is no opportunity for that ability to rise to the surface to make a contribution. If the member for York East does not understand that after a year here, we are in serious trouble, because it means she has been seduced into the system already, having been here a year. If she does not think there is a need for change, I am really concerned.

During a minority government, you can get something to committee to look at it. In a majority government, no, ball game over. Private members are interfered with. My friend the member for Waterloo North (Mr. Epp) was going to support me in a resolution. He was pulled off the committee because he did not have the ear of the government.

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Mr. Henderson: There is so much I would like to say and so little time. I do want to respond to the comments of my colleague the member for York East. Of course, I do share her view that we need a compromise. I have argued for a shift in the compromise. I have not, incidentally, argued for the American system, which I think all of us agree puts too much on the individual legislator and leaves him too vulnerable to unhealthy pressures. On the matter of her view of caucus function and democracy, I must say I do have a different view. I think she is being a little idealistic.

It is very difficult for me, because I cannot say more or speak in very much detail, but I want to take a moment to quote a few brief phrases from

individuals who have not been seduced into the system. The first is from Pierre Trudeau, who said: "There nowhere exists a power that does not seek to increase itself. That is a universal law." Surely that admonition is something we have to take very seriously and be very careful about.

I want to quote Jean Chrétien, who said: "The power is really with the Prime Minister. There are no votes except on marginal issues." Surely if a man of Jean Chrétien's experience makes that kind of comment, we need to be careful about the potential for concentration of power.

A very senior member of this Legislature, whom I unfortunately do not think I can identify, said: "The whole government process rests on half a dozen people: the Premier, two or three of his most influential ministers and the two opposition leaders. If everybody else went home, it wouldn't matter so very much."

Mr. Martel: It is even worse in a majority.

Mr. Henderson: That, I think, is a truism. I can tell from the member's comments that he agrees, and it does highlight the necessity to be very careful about democratic process.

Finally, I want to quote Eugene Whelan, who observed: "A party caucus is not a democratic institution." Eugene Whelan also has been around a while, and I think he speaks from some experience and wisdom.

In the moments that remain, I want only to thank all members for their very constructive discussion of this issue. I was warned—indeed, I warned myself before I was warned by others—that for a government member to stand up and propose these kinds of reforms would open the door for opposition members to lambaste the government. Members have not done that. I argued that if as a government member I am prepared to cast the searchlight a little bit on us, others will do the same. Indeed, that is exactly what members did. It is what the member for Carleton-Grenville (Mr. Sterling) and others did. Not one member, actually, has exploited the opportunity to criticize the government. For that, I commend members and I am very grateful. It shows the democratic process is alive and well in Ontario.

ANIMALS FOR RESEARCH AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Philip moved second reading of Bill 21, An Act to amend the Animals for Research Act.

Mr. Philip: I appreciate the tremendous support and encouragement that many members of all three parties have shown to this bill. Many members who at first had stated opposition to the

bill have in the past few days listened patiently to my explanations and indicated that they would support the bill. I apologize to those few members with whom I have not had an opportunity to sit down personally and explain the contents of the bill.

I also appreciate the great amount of public support I have obtained for the bill. It took a lot of dedication from those volunteers who obtained the 10,291 signatures on a petition I introduced yesterday to the Lieutenant Governor and members of this Legislative Assembly. I appreciate the efforts and interest shown by people who have come to the Legislative Assembly today to show their interest and encouragement and who have telephoned me during the past few days.

I appreciate the endorsements of the 27 humane societies, the Association of Animal Shelter Administrators of Ontario and the municipal councils of the cities of York, Mississauga, Toronto, North Bay, Scarborough and Etobicoke and the borough of East York. Last, I want to thank two people in particular, Ann Doncaster and Robert Nesbitt, who worked tirelessly in educating the public and in talking to members of the Legislature with me.

The fact that an independent poll taken by Angus Reid showed yesterday that an overwhelming number of Ontario residents are in support of this bill can be attributed in many ways to the educational legwork done by so many volunteers.

This bill is a very conservative bill. It does not stop research on animals. It merely gives municipalities the right if they so wish, since they pay 100 per cent of the cost of animal shelters, to refuse the handing over of pets for research.

There are humane, scientific and democratic reasons for supporting the bill. Pounds represent an intent to involve the public in animal care and control. Historically, the need for such control was the reason for their institution. Unclaimed animals roaming the streets starve, are hit by cars, get into garbage, bite children, become rabid, etc. On the other hand, pound seizure negates the social value of the pound, which was instituted to address this problem. If people do not take the animals to pounds because they know such animals may end up in research facilities, pound legislation is subverted and the animal population increases.

The public must have confidence in its pounds, otherwise people would rather let the animal run loose on the street and take its chances there than see it handed over to research facilities. As someone who was an employee for

the Ontario Federation of Agriculture before being elected, I know only too well the harm that dogs running in packs create in rural areas, dogs that have been abandoned in these rural areas by people who, for whatever reason, would not take them to the pounds, often the city pounds where they should have been taken in the first place. When this happens, municipalities must make provision for official ways of animal control. This merely increases the cost to local taxpayers.

Moreover, the humane purpose of pounds is also being negated. One of their original purposes was to protect unprotected animals, which would be housed until homes could be found for them or they could be humanely euthanized. The subversion of their purpose also works to destroy the morale of the staff working in animal shelters. People who are there wish to assist animals, and instead they are caught between the public feeling against pound seizure and their responsibility under the law.

Under the present act, any laboratory can request a pet from a pound in this province—and in two other provinces in Canada—and the pound has no right to refuse. Indeed, a jail sentence can occur for such a refusal. Even though pounds are financed entirely from municipal taxes, those municipal councillors and aldermen, democratically elected, have no say in this matter. Some faceless bureaucrat, backed by Big Brother at Queen's Park in the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, can impose his or her will on them. Thus, more than 5,000 pets are taken from pounds each year in Ontario for use in laboratories.

Let me deal with some of the scientific arguments in favour of this bill. Those who preach doom and gloom for scientific research if this bill passes are alarmists and need a course in scientific reasoning. These alarmists—indeed, if I might use the word, these extremists—fail to point out that some of the most prestigious institutions conducting biomedical research are found in those US states that have legislation similar to this bill. Examples are the Johns Hopkins University and Harvard University. Other examples are some of the excellent research being conducted in Europe where pound seizure is not allowed.

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There is no question that some researchers support the use of pound animals. However, many of the world's most prestigious research agencies and many individual scientists do not. Scientific experiments are designed to eliminate or at the very least to minimize variables. Random-source or pound animals, because of

their unknown genetic and medical histories, introduce a variety of uncontrollable factors that many scientists believe make research results highly unreliable.

As early as 1963, the US Food and Drug Administration concluded that the use of these animals often resulted in "a succession of questionable and unintelligible data when an experiment was concluded." The pharmaceutical industry has all but abandoned the use of random-source animals because of their proven unreliability. The National Institutes of Health, which funds over 80 per cent of all biomedical research in the US, uses purpose-bred dogs in its own research.

At a meeting held in December 1983, the International Organizations of Medical Science, established under the auspices of the World Health Organization and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, recommended against the use of stray or ownerless domestic animals for experimental purposes.

In the light of these doubts about the scientific validity of using random-source animals and in the interests of ensuring good science, the world trend today is away from the use of pound animals. Some who oppose the bill use economic arguments as their last resort. There is little doubt that animals obtained from shelters are cheaper to buy initially, but they are more expensive to use. The fact that the death rate is so much higher among pound animals than among purpose-bred animals makes the argument of cost somewhat suspect.

Let me give an example of one of the studies that has been done. The University of Oregon, using both purpose-bred dogs and random-source dogs in experimental heart valve replacement, concluded that purpose-bred dogs were cheaper to use, despite the fact that the purchase price of the random-source dogs was lower. The reason for this result was as follows. The survival rate of the purpose-bred dog was much higher than that of the random-source animals. Ninety-three per cent of the purpose-bred dogs survived the experimental surgery, whereas only 73 per cent of the random-source dogs survived. To end up with 100 animals at the end of surgery, one would have to start with 108 purpose-bred dogs or 137 random-source ones. A second study by the National Institutes of Health confirmed these findings.

These hidden costs are understandable. Psychologists who have studied the situation have concluded beyond doubt that animals that have

been free and that have received human affection suffer more stress when research is done on them than purpose-bred animals.

In asking members to support this bill, I am not sabotaging research in this province. I am asking that the members vote to protect the effectiveness of the animal control system in this province. People must have confidence that if they bring a stray animal or pet to the pound, it will either be adopted or euthanized in a humane way.

It has been found that the release of unclaimed pets from public shelters for research has several immediate effects on municipal control programs. It causes fewer people to use the shelter services. The majority of animals obtained by municipal animal control centres are actually delivered by the public. The results of opinion polls in Canada and the US suggest that the public will not co-operate when such facilities are subject to pound seizure legislation. This results in greater numbers of lost and homeless animals remaining on the streets or, as we find in Ontario, in the countryside. As any farmer will tell you, the major problem in rural areas is not wolf packs, but dog packs. There will be an increase in the cat and dog populations, of particular concern to rural areas or in children's public play areas. The cost of animal control escalates as a result of the present legislation. Last, fewer animals will be reunited with their owners.

At the beginning of my speech, I said it was a moderate bill. It is supported by moderate, somewhat conservative organizations. It bases its arguments on the rights of municipal councillors, who are elected locally, to make a decision either for or against the use of animals in research. They have the democratic right to go one way or the other under this bill.

This bill says to a senior in my riding, who is now facing the tremendous need to enter a nursing home, that if she allows her cat to go to the local Etobicoke pound, it will be either adopted or at least humanely destroyed. In the case of that woman—and this is a real and specific case—she will not take the kind of housing she needs because of fear of what may happen to her cat. That is the perceived understanding out there in the community and that is why the pound operators in Ontario are so concerned that this bill pass.

This bill is not based on an antiresearch bias; it is based on a sense that animals can be used in a scientific way, but not pound animals. It goes no further than this, and I ask for the support of all members of the House.

Mr. Polsinelli: Before beginning my remarks, I point out to the member for Etobicoke that I will not support this legislation as I think it has the potential to badly cripple medical research in our province.

One of the initial comments I would like to make is that if an Ontarian brings a pet to a pound, that animal does not necessarily have to go to medical research, because the person bringing in the pet can simply say to the poundkeeper: "Euthanize it; kill it. I do not want it to go to research." In that case, the animal will not go to research.

The proposal made by the member for Etobicoke to amend the Animals for Research Act is disarmingly simple. It would give municipalities the right to pass a bylaw that would allow municipal poundkeepers to kill dogs and cats rather than send them for medical research. This would deny our medical schools and research institutions access to unwanted animals for essential teaching, testing and research work.

This is a controversial enough issue, but it is quite likely that a good number of municipalities, responding to a small group, a vocal minority, will pass such legislation denying our institutions the right to use such animals for medical research. Of course, what the proposed amendment does not do is suggest where the animals for research are to be obtained once this source dries up. That is where this seemingly simple amendment becomes a little more complex.

If researchers could not obtain the dogs and cats they need from municipal pounds, they would then have two choices. They would either buy animals from private sources—that is, people in the business of obtaining animals for research—or have dogs and cats especially bred for that purpose. I would like to look at each solution in turn.

Before the Animals for Research Act was introduced, researchers depended on dogs obtained from uncontrolled sources, supplied by dog dealers. It was suspected at the time that some of these animals were procured illegally. In fact, pets may have been stolen off the street by so-called dognappers. After public hearings, the law was designed to eliminate dog dealers as a source of laboratory animals, and it was successful in so doing.

I am sure all honourable members of this assembly will agree it is not in the best interests of our citizens and their pets to return to a situation where pets are at risk from unscrupulous dog dealers and dognappers. It may prove to

be an interesting little sideline for some unscrupulous members of our society to go back into dognapping rather than any other type of napping.

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Breeding animals especially for research sounds like a good idea, but it is also a very expensive proposal. The rough estimate to obtain a large, laboratory-reared dog is about \$750 each. This would translate into about \$2.2 million annually.

It is not only that, but we must also recognize that, whether an animal is reared or whether it is obtained from the pound, it would still be subjected to research and the one in the pound would still be killed. What one is doing is rearing other animals for the same purpose.

Any such change in the current legislation would have a totally unnecessary and negative impact on biomedical research in this province. That would be a tragedy, especially when we consider how vital animals are for research.

It is estimated that about 90 per cent of the medical advances we have benefited from in this country have resulted from research using animals. We must remember that in 1900 the average lifespan was about 45 years. Today we live to an age of about 70. Much of this progress is due to medicines and procedures we now take for granted.

We can talk about things such as organ transplants, cancer therapy, heart bypass surgery and artificial joints, as well as insulin, vaccines against polio, diphtheria, small pox, measles and mumps, blood transfusions, heart pace-makers and a whole host of other treatments. The use of dogs was essential to developing these types of treatments, particularly in the situation involving heart and organ transplants.

Many of us have recently read about the young Toronto woman, Ann Harrison, who successfully underwent the world's first double lung transplant at the Toronto General Hospital. The development of that procedure required the use of laboratory animals.

Research using animals has also helped other animals live longer and better lives. Some examples are vaccines to inoculate household pets against rabies and for such livestock diseases as tetanus and anthrax and the development of painless embryo transfer techniques widely used in agriculture to improve livestock breeding.

We should put this whole matter of animals for research in perspective. The vast majority of such animals, over 90 per cent of them, are rodents, such as rats and mice. Cats and dogs

represent only about one per cent of the animals used, and the balance are fish, guinea-pigs and other animals. I am sure the member for Etobicoke (Mr. Philip) probably has very little sympathy for those animals.

Under our present legislation, institutions that use animals for research, testing or teaching have to be licensed by the ministry. They must follow rigorous regulations established under the current legislation and monitored by ministry veterinarians. Researchers also operate under the eyes of each institution's animal care committee, which must be established under the act.

Some people claim that alternative methods should replace animals in research, as the member for Etobicoke has pointed out, but the fact is that many critical tests and procedures cannot be carried out except by using animals. For example, you cannot study blindness using bacteria; you cannot examine the effects of high blood pressure by using tissue culture; nor can you examine the results of surgery by using a computer. In each case, you need a complex, living organism.

I am given to understand that research involving animals offers the best hope for developing treatment for and possibly preventing such diseases as cancer, heart disease, multiple sclerosis, cystic fibrosis, muscular dystrophy and diabetes. If a cure for acquired immune deficiency syndrome is to be found, animals must be used for research.

I hope members will agree with me that to vote in favour of this bill would be a major mistake. It would risk a return to the uncontrolled procurement of dogs and cats, a situation that existed prior to the Animals for Research Act. It would not only inhibit medical research in this province but could also seriously endanger the future of this vital, lifegiving work.

To conclude, I will quote briefly from a Toronto Star editorial of last year on animals for research, commenting on the pressure already exerted on municipalities not to provide dogs to research facilities.

"It is time for common sense and the rights of human beings to prevail. As for the guardians of animal rights, wouldn't their efforts and money be better spent trying to instil some responsibility into pet owners, whose neglect leads to overcrowded dog pounds in the first place?"

It seems to me this portion of the editorial was apropos, because if we had responsible pet owners, we would have fewer animals in the pounds.

I remember my experience as an alderman on North York council. The municipalities already have certain rights and there are certain actions they can take. They can establish a dog registry for lost and unwanted animals so that the owners can phone a central clearing house and find out whether a pet is lost. The municipalities can enforce bylaws requiring pet owners to buy licences. Above all, the best protection pet owners can have for their pets is to go to their municipality, their city or town, and buy a licence for their dog. If the dog is carrying a licence and a collar with the name on it, it will be returned if it is picked up by a poundkeeper.

The answer is not in the seemingly simple solution the member for Etobicoke proposes, saying to the poundkeepers, "You can kill the dogs and cats if your municipality allows you to do it." The answer is more public education, telling pet owners that they can do certain things to protect their pets if they truly care for and love them, telling the municipalities they should enforce their bylaws in terms of obtaining licences and having inspectors, and telling pet owners they can buy licences and have certain other things done to protect their pets from going to research.

Above all, if an individual brings an animal to a pound because he does not want it any more for any reason, he does not have to face the risk of sending the animal to research. All he has to do is instruct the poundkeeper that he wants the animal euthanized, that he wants it killed and does not want it to go to research; then the animal will not go to research.

Mr. Gordon: After listening to the member for Yorkview, I am shocked and appalled. If I were a pet owner in Ontario, I would say the message he just sent to the pet owners of Ontario is that the government is going to come and get their pets in the event they happen to stray or end up in a pound, and that the government is in favour of seeing pets given to research organizations if the pound so desires.

I do not think he realizes that pet owners in this province invest a lot of time in their pets and that pets are animals they love and care for. If the member for Yorkview thinks it over, I am sure that if he had a dog or cat and that dog or cat ended up in a pound and then was taken out of the pound for the purposes of research, and he went to the pound and found the dog or cat was gone, he would be horrified. Any feeling human being who realizes we are all part of this animal kingdom will be revolted by the speech the member just made on this topic. I am shocked.

I must say to the member for Yorkview and to the current government that at present there are companies all around the world that breed animals specifically for research. The bill that has been brought forward by the member for Etobicoke recognizes that to advance medicine in the world today and to find ways in which we can battle certain diseases and so forth, it is necessary to do research on animals. The member for Etobicoke is not saying he is against research. He is saying he supports the view of many health organizations in the world today. He supports the view of 21 European countries that have signed a convention that says animals will not be released from pounds to research organizations.

There is a simple reason for this, a reason that has a lot of logic. If you get animals from companies that breed them, you know their genetic background, their medical history and how they have been bred. This is very important when using animals to further the interests of health in the medical-scientific world. That is a very important point, one that has been recognized by the European countries and by the majority of pharmaceutical firms in the world today. They do not want pets from pounds. What are we doing arguing against something such as this?

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Municipalities put up the moneys for municipal pounds. Those municipal councillors should have the right to decide what will happen to those pets. One of the reasons it is so difficult for many pounds to sell tags and to do the types of things they want to do in municipalities is this very negative and destructive approach to the animal kingdom. It is time this government woke up and began to see what was really important.

I want to talk for one minute about my pet, my cat. I have to tell members this. That cat is almost human. The cat's name is TJ.

Mr. Polsinelli: Does it talk to the member?

Mr. Gordon: I will bet any money that if that cat belonged to the member for Yorkview and he locked his house, that cat would find a way to get in and the member would still be standing outside. As a matter of fact, not only is that cat resourceful but he is also a true tom-cat. I want to tell Colin Brown, head of the National Citizens Coalition Inc., that my cat TJ would not have voted for Bill 7. At the same time, I want to tell members—and I also want to address this to Colin Brown—that while TJ would not have voted for Bill 7, TJ, being a true tom-cat, would have supported pay equity. I know that is something Colin Brown does not believe in.

What I am trying to tell my fellow members with a little bit of humour is that we do invest and we do see personalities in animals. No one can tell me, any of the members of this House or any of the general public, that animals do not have intelligence. They do. No one can tell us they do not have personalities. Anyone who has owned a pet knows that. How could this House vote against the member for Etobicoke's bill, which is a very enlightened bill? Mind you, as far as some animal lovers are concerned, it does not go far enough, but it is a good halfway measure. It is a measure that thinking people can agree with and believe in.

I urge all the members in this House to recognize that it is very destructive to have a situation in municipalities where research labs can come in, demand the pets, take them away and then do all kinds of research on those animals. I do not think any thinking person could agree with that, particularly when we know there are companies that can provide the animals, where the breed, the medical history and those types of things are all known. I urge members to vote for the member's bill. Speaking for TJ, I think he would vote for it if he could just put up his little paw.

Mr. Swart: I am pleased to rise and speak in support of this bill by my colleague the member for Etobicoke. I want to commend him, as I have often commended my colleagues and members in other parts of this House when they have brought in private members' bills I support. I do that today with a great deal of enthusiasm.

I do that perhaps with more enthusiasm than usual because this bill today is somewhat typical of the attitude and the successful endeavours of my colleague the member for Etobicoke on humane matters. Some of the newer members of this House will not know that quite a number of years ago—I am not sure how many; it must have been eight or 10 years ago—my colleague brought in a bill to ban the use of leghold traps, except in very exceptional circumstances. That was passed in this Legislature. In fact, I think I am correct in saying it was the first private members' bill that received approval and then was incorporated into, I believe it was, the Game and Fish Act of that time by the government of this province. This is sort of typical of the efforts my colleague the member for Etobicoke has put into humane matters.

When I was reading over this bill, making a few notes and reading comments about the bill, the thought went through my mind that it was so sensible that I could not anticipate anyone in this

House rising to speak in opposition to it. It makes eminent sense. The issue is not whether animals should be used for research, and the bill does not prohibit that in any sense. In his opening remarks, my colleague made it clear he agrees it is necessary to use animals for research. There is no one in this Legislature, and few people outside this Legislature in this province, who would not agree that is a necessity.

The member for Yorkview talks about the need for that research and says it must continue. They are weighing human life against animal life very often, and nobody disagrees with that philosophy. That does not mean pets and animals in the pound have to be used for research or that the researcher should have the automatic right to demand the use of those animals in the pound.

Perhaps all of us would like to see a situation where the Animals for Research Act was toughened up a bit so there would have to be, as much as possible, humane treatment of the animals being used in research. It bothers us somewhat that there is exemption from the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act in this act. Granted it has other provisions, but some of us think they may not be adequate to protect the animals being used.

The issue that is before us is not whether animals should be used for research. The issue is whether pets, strays, animals that for one reason or another come into the pound can automatically be taken by a research facility for use for research. It is very obvious that many of these animals in the pound are someone's pet. Regardless of the way they got there, they are someone's pet, whether they have been lost or whatever the case may be. They are pets that have been loved very deeply by someone.

The member for Sudbury (Mr. Gordon) mentioned his cat and the attachment he had to it. I was thinking when he mentioned it, he did not mention anything about fat cats. There are some of those in this corner of the House we would like to dissect.

Generally, these animals are pets of someone. Any of us who are parents or grandparents know of the attachment that children and adults get to pets and how abhorrent it is to them when they know that under certain circumstances the pet they love, and love dearly, which has become a member of the family, may be used for research. If one asked the families who have pets how many of them would like their pets to end up in research, one would probably get at least a 90 per cent response very strongly in opposition to it.

Apart from that, and that certainly has to be the main issue, my colleague the member for Etobicoke and various other groups have pointed out that pound animals are not the best for research in any event.

1140

I was surprised that the member for Yorkview would point out that it was possible for a person to prevent the animal from being used for research. That is true only in the sense that if you know your animal is in that pound and you do not want it back from the pound, then you can prevent it from being used for research; you can have it put to death. But that does not apply to one per cent of the animals that are in the pound. In the case of all the rest of the animals that are in the pound, to which the research organizations have a right, there is a real penalty for anybody interfering in that. I refer to section 21 of the act, which says:

"Every person who contravenes any of the provisions of this act...or the regulations, other than a regulation made under clause 23(h)(j) or (l)...is guilty of an offence and on conviction is liable for a first offence to a fine of not more than \$500 or to imprisonment for a term of not more than three months, or to both, and for a subsequent offence to a fine of not more than \$1,000 or to imprisonment for a term of not more than six months, or to both."

That makes it clear, if nothing else does, that the law is solidly behind the research organizations or anyone who wants to use an animal for research from that pound in confiscating it from that pound. The bill that is being introduced by my colleague, as he has already pointed out, goes only part-way from that. It does not make it automatic any more. It leaves it up to the local municipality to make that determination.

As he has already said, it is a very moderate bill. He used the word "conservative." I would not go as far as that, because after 42 years the Conservative government did not have that kind of clause. In fact, they are the ones responsible for the situation that exists today. Of course, I realize they have a much more progressive group here now than when that bill was passed, and all of them today will be supporting this bill, which has been put forward by my colleague the member for Etobicoke.

Mr. McKessock: I rise to speak in opposition to Bill 21. First, I do not want there to be any misunderstanding about the present legislation. The poundkeeper does not have the automatic right to send the animal that is in his keeping to research. If the owner does not want an animal to

go to research, the act says it will not. New developments have made it possible for more and more research to be done without using animals. Dogs and cats represent one per cent or less of the animals used in research in Ontario.

However, the fact remains that the animals—and these include unowned and otherwise unwanted dogs and cats—are essential to some kinds of research. Dogs are essential particularly in the research involving heart surgery or organ transplant. As my colleague mentioned, a young woman recently received the world's first double lung transplant in Toronto. The technique was perfected on animals. When it came time to treat a human with badly diseased lungs, the surgeons were pretty sure it would be successful because of the experience gained in carrying out the transplant first on animals.

Honourable members should know that the present Animals for Research Act provides many safeguards for pet owners and for unwanted animals. The legislation prevents those animals that are wanted as pets from being used in research by requiring municipal pounds to keep stray animals a minimum of three days. This does not include the day of pickup, weekends or holidays. Municipalities have the right to extend this period if they wish.

For those who do not know what a municipal pound is, it is a place set up by the municipality to house and care for lost and unwanted animals. Municipal pounds are required as well to take all reasonable steps to find the owner if there is any identification on the animal.

The current law also provides that a person who no longer wants an animal can bring it to the pound and request that the animal be killed or given a new owner. If he or she so requests, the individual giving up the animal can be assured the unwanted cat or dog will not be used in research.

If an animal that is not wanted and is not owned is purchased by a research facility, the act establishes standards of care and treatment that are monitored by inspectors from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. These veterinarians make unannounced visits to research facilities to ensure that in experimental situations the animal suffers no unnecessary pain. In fact, the legislation requires the animal be given anaesthetics and painkillers as preventives.

Another check on animal welfare is made by an animal care committee. This committee is required under the act to be established in each research facility. It must include at least one

veterinarian and is responsible for the standards of animal care in the facility.

However, the bill we are discussing today, Bill 21, would affect only one aspect of the current animals-for-research legislation; that is, the procurement of animals from pounds. Bill 21 would give municipalities the right to pass a bylaw allowing pounds to ignore requests from research facilities for dogs and cats. That does not sound like much of a change, but others whose full-time concern is the welfare of animals do not want to see it passed either.

The Ontario Humane Society, representing some 58 local societies in our province, is opposed to Bill 21. I would like to quote from a letter sent to the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr. Riddell) last year by Tom Hughes, president of the Ontario Humane Society. Mr. Hughes says, "The Ontario Humane Society has reached the conclusion that this act, Bill 21, no matter how well-meaning, is unfortunate and will actually produce more suffering than less."

He goes on to say that if the member for Etobicoke's bill in its present form is passed, it will result in "every municipality being subjected to the pressure of lobby groups, using modern tactics and, if necessary, extreme tactics such as we have seen demonstrated by animal rights groups in recent months and years."

Mr. Hughes says the result could be that, "After nearly 20 years, we would be regressing to actually the same unfortunate, disgraceful, totally unacceptable situation that existed in the 1960s and which led to the introduction of the Animals for Research Act in the first place, i.e., self-employed dealers in animals for research."

Just before Christmas, Mr. Hughes wrote again to the minister, suggesting some amendments to improve the current legislation. These are now being studied and considered. Right now, we are faced with Bill 21, which represents a form of pressure to tamper with a piece of legislation that works well.

This pressure to change the practice of providing unwanted pound dogs for research is not confined to Ontario. Similar laws have been proposed in many states in the US. One that did make such a change was Massachusetts, home of many of America's great university and research facilities. What happened there? Two things are worth noting. First, researchers were forced to acquire dogs and cats from other jurisdictions, including the nearby province of Quebec. Quebec, by the way, has no legislation comparable to our Animals for Research Act to protect and control the procurement of dogs for research.

Second, the state legislature in Massachusetts received several requests from animal rightists for legislation to ban the use of animals of any kind in research.

We can learn from the events in other jurisdictions. We can and should resist the siren call of Bill 21. Bill 21 only opens the door to crippling medical research in Ontario, to slowing down or stopping the advances of our scientists and physicians in enhancing and prolonging human life. As my colleague mentioned, the lengthening of the average life span from 45 years in the 1900s to 70 years today is due in large measure to research carried on with the use of animals. That research has benefited animals as well as people, thanks to disease prevention techniques that have enhanced the lives of our companion animals and livestock. Bill 21 is a regressive piece of legislation. I will vote against it and urge members of the House to do likewise.

1150

I am sure my cat, which can ring the doorbell and is just as smart as the pet belonging to the member for Sudbury, would feel badly if he heard the member say today that he was not good enough for research. I am sure that if my cat could speak, he would much prefer to be used for research than to be put to sleep.

Mr. Speaker: The member for Mississauga South for two minutes.

Mrs. Marland: For two minutes?

Mr. Speaker: Now it is less than that.

Mrs. Marland: Since I have only two minutes left, which disappoints me greatly because I had some valuable arguments to contribute to this debate, I will focus on the one point that those speaking in opposition to this bill seem to have missed totally; that is, the proponents of this bill, in no way or at any time, are opposed to the use of animals for research.

No one recognizes better than I do the need for animals for research, having lost a child to leukaemia, for which at this time there is no known cure. To anyone who quotes examples of heart disease, as has the last speaker for the Liberal Party, I say there is no question that is not the debate. The debate is on letting us have the animals for research that will best perform and facilitate the need. Randomly taken animals, or animals that are strays on the streets and those that are given to a public pound in faith and confidence that if they are not adopted they will be euthanized painlessly, are not the animals to be used for research.

That the Animals for Research Act allows for somebody giving his animal to ask that it not be given for research but that it be destroyed is fine for the animals that are physically taken to those pounds, but I would like to know how the members of the Liberal government, who are obviously against pets and pet owners in Ontario, expect an animal to speak for itself.

Mr. Speaker: The member's time has expired. The member for Etobicoke for about six and a half minutes.

Mr. Philip: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order: Since I have more than six minutes, may I give another two minutes to the member for Mississauga South (Mrs. Marland), who obviously has some encouraging and interesting things to say. Is that permissible?

Mr. Speaker: It certainly is permissible because the honourable member did have only two minutes.

Mr. Philip: I give her some of my final minutes then, so that she can continue her remarks.

Mrs. Marland: I thank the member for Etobicoke for the additional two minutes.

I want to dissociate the proponents of this bill from groups such as the Animal Liberation Front. The publicity generated and the actions taken by the Animal Liberation Front members are not thrusts that I personally take; neither would the people I know who support this bill wish to be associated with those. I speak very strongly in support of the bill not only on behalf of the animal owners that I represent but also on behalf of the Mississauga city council, which has already passed a resolution in support of the direction of this bill.

Mrs. Ann Doncaster, to whom the the member for Etobicoke has already referred this morning, is a constituent of mine. She is the founder of the Mississauga Animal Rights Society, and she too feels that the Animal Liberation Front's tactics are not the kinds of tactics with which her group wishes to be associated.

The fact that purpose-bred animals are free from disease and inherent generic health problems, and have never been subjected to the benefits—I should not say “subjected to”—have never been the beneficiaries of loving care and attention and all the advantages of being a pet, means that those animals do not suffer to the degree that an animal which has received human support does.

Mr. Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Philip: I want to thank all members for their contribution, whether for or against the bill. I appreciate the points they made in this debate. I would like, however, to address some of the comments made by some of the members.

For example, most of the comments made by the member for Yorkview, or a good many of them, were completely irrelevant to the bill. One has to wonder whether he has read the bill. No one in this House is questioning the value that medical research has brought over the years. No one is suggesting that research at this time should somehow be rolled back. There is research going on in all the European countries, despite the fact that pound seizure is illegal in those countries. There is excellent research going on in the US, despite the fact that in many of those states which have some of the largest biological research facilities the use of pound animals is illegal.

He talks about a small, vocal minority, but in fact polls released only yesterday by a reputable polling association showed an overwhelming percentage of the Ontario population in favour of this bill. The fact that a majority of the people in Ontario are in favour of this bill makes those people, I suppose, a small, vocal minority to the member for Yorkview.

He talked about costs, and mentioned \$700, but no one has been able to produce any research that showed that kind of figure being paid in a majority or an average number of cases. The research is to the contrary. The use of pound animals often has so many hidden costs that it comes out as expensive as the use of specially bred animals.

He charges that research facilities will buy illegally. I find that to be the most insulting remark to the researchers in this province. To say those people, many of whom are getting provincial funds, are going to purchase animals from illegal sources is insulting to me and, I am sure, to them. Yet if one looks at those jurisdictions where pound seizure is illegal and where research is going on, one does not see that kind of illegal activity. The researchers there behave in a legal manner; they do not buy stolen animals. To suggest that Ontario researchers will somehow be more illegal in their operations than researchers in other countries is an insult to the researchers in this province.

I found it sad to listen to the speech of the member for Grey (Mr. McKessock). There is no doubt that in any of the research being done by any of the psychologists or biologists that pound animals, animals that have experienced human affection, suffer more stress and have a death rate

far in excess of specially bred animals. The member for Grey loves to go around this province talking about how Christian he is, yet his actions are going to cause more suffering without any kind of payoff in any way.

The statement by the member for Grey assuming that because the Ontario Humane Society represents 27 societies the 27 societies are in accord with the Ontario Humane Society against the bill is an outright misrepresentation. Each of those 27 societies has written to me and said it is in support of the bill. The fact is that in the Ontario Humane Society Tom Hughes is against the bill, and there is considerable pressure against him within that society for the statements he made without any authorization from anyone.

I know members will have a free vote on this. I am pleased a number of members of the Liberal Party have said to me that they will vote according to their consciences, that they will not let any cabinet minister tell them how to vote.

Mr. Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Philip: I ask for that kind of support and thank the Conservative members and New Democrats who are supporting the bill.

1200

ROLE OF PRIVATE MEMBERS

Mr. Speaker: Mr. Henderson has moved resolution 76.

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion the ayes have it.

Motion agreed to.

1206

ANIMALS FOR RESEARCH AMENDMENT ACT

The House divided on Mr. Philip's motion for second reading of Bill 21, which was agreed to on the following vote:

Ayes

Allen, Barlow, Breaugh, Bryden, Callahan, Charlton, Cooke, D. S., Cousens, Davis, Dean, Gigantes, Gordon, Grande, Gregory, Grier, Henderson, Jackson, Johnston, R. F., Lane, Marland, Martel, McCague, McClellan, Mitchell, Morin-Strom, Philip, Pollock, Pouliot, Reville, Rowe, Ruprecht, Sheppard, Shymko, Smith, E. J., Sterling, Swart, Treleaven, Warner.

Nays

Andrewes, Bossy, Epp, Ferraro, Foulds, Fulton, Haggerty, Knight, Laughren, Lupusella, Mackenzie, Mancini, McKessock, Miller, G. I., Morin, Newman, Nixon, Polsinelli, Smith, D. W., Taylor, Wildman.

Ayes 38; nays 21.

The House recessed at 12:09 p.m.

AFTERNOON SITTING

The House resumed at 1:30 p.m.

Hon. Mr. Ruprecht: I ask for unanimous consent of the House to make a special statement on Ukrainian Independence Day and for the participation of the other parties.

Mr. Speaker: Is there unanimous agreement?
Agreed to.

UKRAINIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

Hon. Mr. Ruprecht: I would like to recognize in the gallery prominent members of the Ukrainian-Canadian community, among whom are Dr. Peter Hlibowych, president of the Ukrainian Canadian Committee of Ontario Council; Right Reverend Peter Bublyk, a representative of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church; Father Dr. Stasiw, vicar-general of the Ukrainian Catholic Church of eastern Canada; and Dr. George Danyliw, president of the Ukrainian People's Home.

On behalf of the Premier (Mr. Peterson), my colleagues and the government of Ontario, I rise for the purpose of recognizing January 22 as an important date in history for freedom-loving peoples everywhere and of special significance to our Canadian citizens of Ukrainian heritage.

Today is the commemoration of the 69th anniversary of January 22, 1918, the proclamation of the Ukraine as a sovereign, democratic nation and of the unification of the eastern and western parts of the Ukraine into a single independent state exactly one year later on January 22, 1919.

We who live in a democratic society do not always appreciate our good fortune. We take for granted our freedom of speech, press, religion, travel and, most important, the right not only to criticize but also to vote openly for the party of our choice. The courageous determination of the Ukrainian people to regain this kind of freedom is a source of inspiration to all mankind. Having tasted liberty, neither the weapon of starvation nor prison walls could extinguish the torch of freedom and hope that has been resolutely passed on from one heroic generation to the next. I am convinced the rich heritage and proud tradition of the Ukrainians will endure for ever.

Those who have come to Canada from the Ukraine in search of freedom and opportunity since 1891 have made important contributions to the development of our province and country and to the enrichment of our culture. With their ethic

of hard work and study, they take their rightful role as leaders in the professions and business, in education, in sports and in government.

I recall that after the Chernobyl nuclear disaster last April, when I spoke from the steps of Queen's Park, people of all political parties, races and religions attended to express by their presence the compassion of the Canadian people and to stretch out our hands in friendship to Canadians of Ukrainian heritage in their hour of grief and concern.

I admire the unbreakable spirit of optimism and hope of our Ukrainian friends. In spite of past tragic events, they are already planning for next year the celebration of 1,000 years of Christianity in the Ukraine.

It gives us great pleasure to extend our heartiest congratulations and best wishes to the thriving Canadian-Ukrainian community as we recognize January 22, 1987, as Ukrainian Independence Day and commend its observance to all the people of Ontario.

Permit me to say:

[Remarks in Ukrainian]

Mr. Shymko: I join my colleague the member for Parkdale in the remarks he has made on this very special occasion. None of us, on whatever side of the House we may be sitting, see this as merely an ethnic function. We see it as an historic moment in the history of mankind, at a time when upheavals and changes in the political, social and economic systems gave hope to many nations to declare themselves independent, with the right to live according to the sovereign will of their respective peoples.

What happened 69 years ago on January 22, 1918, with the declaration of the independence of the Ukrainian republic was followed by similar declarations by peoples of the former czarist empire of Russia. It was followed subsequently by the creation of such independent states as Czechoslovakia, under the guidance of Masaryk.

These hopes, although they have been dashed and independence destroyed, live on among the Ukrainian people, who suffered enormously in the so-called civil war that reigned from 1917 to 1921. They also suffered immeasurably through a system that artificially planned a holocaust of their people with the starvation of seven million to eight million following the tragedy of that proclamation at a time when the secretary-

general of the Communist Party of the Ukraine, Mr. Skrypnyk, committed suicide in protest.

There followed the annihilation of 5.8 million Ukrainian people by the Nazi regime during the Second World War, 800,000 of whom were Ukrainian Jews. It continues today with the hopes that are cherished by the dissident movement of intellectuals and cultural and religious leaders, in particular the leaders of the Ukrainian Catholic Church and the Ukrainian autocephalous Orthodox Church, which is not recognized legally by the present regime. Six million Catholics do not have the right to worship in their faith in the Soviet Union, a year before the millenium of Christianity in that part of the world.

This is not an occasion for us simply to speak because we may perceive it as the function of some ethnic group so let us do our political thing to make them happy and some votes may result. As members of the Legislature, we have attached a universal importance to such occasions. On November 15, 1984, we supported unanimously a private member's resolution that went beyond the celebration of one ethnic group or one event.

For my honourable colleagues who were here in 1984, and for the sake of those who were absent and those who were welcomed after the election of 1985, I would like to distribute this as a reminder of that resolution:

"That recognizing the universality and indivisibility of freedom and the adherence to the principles of political liberties and national sovereignty as fundamental elements of our free and democratic society; and recognizing in this bicentennial year the significant contribution to Ontario and Canada made by peoples who have settled on our shores as political refugees escaping persecution in their former homelands where national independence and political liberties had been lost as a result of foreign occupation and domination; and acknowledging our government's traditional recognition of the independence proclamations enshrined in the course of history by the sovereign will of the nations with whom these Canadians are related by ancestry, language and culture, this House invites all Ontarians to commemorate these special independence anniversaries on the respective dates that they are celebrated by the various communities, and suggests that the Premier sign, upon request and at his discretion, appropriate proclamations on these occasions and allow for any other appropriate recognition on the commemorative day, and asks this government to urge the

government of Canada to institute a similar practice in Ottawa."

1340

This resolution was passed unanimously, and following the resolution of all the members of the Legislature, the first Premier who made an official proclamation from his office was William G. Davis, followed by another former Premier, the member for Muskoka (Mr. F. S. Miller) and by the present Premier.

These proclamations were signed. I would like to read members the text, not because of any ethnic function but because of a binding resolution by the members of this Legislature, whose importance the member for Humber (Mr. Henderson) raised today but which for some reason we ignore and to whom we sometimes hesitate to give support. The Premier, in his wisdom, gave support. This is what these proclamations, signed by all three Premiers up to January 1986, said:

"Whereas Ontario and Canada have developed through the courage and industry of the people of many nationalities who have come to this land;

"Whereas we are grateful for the many important contributions that our citizens of Ukrainian ancestry continue to make to our province and country;

"Whereas the proclamation of the independence of the Ukrainian republic took place in Kiev, Ukraine, 67 years ago;

"Whereas it is imperative for Canadians to remember that the price of freedom is eternal vigilance; and

"Whereas the observance of this anniversary fosters within us all a deep awareness of our fellow man, whose liberty has been violated;

"Therefore, as Premier of the province of Ontario, I am pleased to recognize January 22, 1985"—and it was subsequently said in 1986 by the present Premier—"as Ukrainian Independence Day and commend its observance to the people of our province."

It was signed by the three Premiers. I am shocked that this year, for some unexplained reason, the Premier has decided to make a complete flip on this very important decision and is refusing to sign further proclamations on the independence days of other groups. I would like to say the following—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Could you complete your remarks briefly, please?

Mr. Shymko: I understand I can speak with some self-discipline, there is no time allocation; but I will try to wrap up my comments. The reason I am making this comment is—

Hon. Mr. Ruprecht: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I think the House should be informed, and so should the member for High Park-Swansea (Mr. Shymko), that the Premier did indeed sign it. A copy is in the possession of Dr. Hlibowych, who is the president of the Ontario branch of the Ukrainian Canadian Committee.

Mr. Shymko: Right up to a few minutes ago, I was told there would be no signing of such proclamations any more, and so I am very pleased that the Premier did indeed sign the proclamation and that he will be singing these proclamations for all of these occasions. This information was conveyed to me wrongly by the Minister without Portfolio responsible for multiculturalism (Mr. Ruprecht), who told me there would be no proclamation. I thank you for my remarks, Mr. Speaker, and I support him.

Hon. Mr. Ruprecht: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order. With respect, we had unanimous consent for representatives of all parties to make brief comments. I will recognize whoever wishes to speak for the New Democratic Party.

Mr. Rae: I will try to pour a little oil on these somewhat turbulent waters by being very brief and speaking to two issues today. I want to say as a New Democrat how much we in our party have been enriched, as has the labour movement and the farmers' movement, not for 20 or 30 years, but indeed for nearly 100 years, by the presence of those in Canada who have come from the Ukraine, first, of course, as refugees from the regime of the czar. They came as Catholics; they came as Jews. They came to make Canada their home.

They participated. They built the west. They participated in all our democratic institutions, from our farmers' co-operatives to our labour movement and our political parties. They now take, rightly and proudly, their places and positions of leadership in every walk of life in our country.

We in Ontario have benefited from and been enriched by that immigration. We have been sustained by the more recent—I speak particularly of the past 40 or 50 years—experience of those who came to this country, not as refugees from czarism, but as refugees from totalitarianism.

To those who are here today, I want on behalf of our party to express our solidarity with them and with the Ukrainian people, to say how strongly we feel about the situation as it currently exists in the Ukraine and to say we are witnesses with them to the continuing tragedy of those who

are not able to worship or express their political views, those who are in jail, in exile or away from their families.

As we solemnly do that, let us also celebrate, because I think it appropriate that we celebrate, our common heritage as Canadians and our sense of at-oneness on this great occasion. I do so in a spirit of nonpartisanship, in which we can all join, to focus, to keep one's eye on the prize of freedom itself.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

ROBBIE BURNS DAY

Mr. Pollock: I ask that all members of this House join me in paying tribute to Robbie Burns. January 25 is Robbie Burns Day. People from all over the province will be celebrating this Scottish poet's birthday as the most important Scottish event in Canada. Immigrants from Scotland and people of Scottish descent will be remembering the land of the heather. Immigrants from Scotland have made a tremendous contribution to this country.

Scotland is a country a lot like Canada, beautiful in many ways but with a harsh climate. Scots, like Canadians, are very proud of their country. I have had the privilege of seeing Edinburgh, driving over the bridge of the Firth of Forth, walking to the top of the Wallace monument and seeing Loch Lomond, Glasgow and the beautiful countryside around Ayr, home of Robbie Burns.

This weekend, when the spirited music of the bagpipes pipes in the haggis and we enjoy some of those traditional Scottish dishes, let us remember the contribution Scottish culture has made to this multicultural province of Ontario.

1350

NATIVE WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE

Mr. Wildman: On this day, when we are talking about our ethnic heritage, I want to bring to the attention of the House the plight of the Native Women's Resource Centre on Gerrard Street in Toronto.

It has been reported, and we have been in touch with the volunteer workers at that centre, that the centre faces imminent closure unless some sort of ongoing funding mechanism is worked out for it. Currently the centre is \$15,000 in debt, is in arrears of rent for some five months and has no prospects of future funding.

This centre is doing very important and necessary work. One of the biggest problems facing native women in the urban setting is the feeling of aloneness, of need for assistance to get

in touch with social services that will assist them to deal with problems such as family violence, homelessness or alcoholism.

It is imperative that this government respond, and respond immediately, not only to deal with the debt, the problem of utilities and rent and the need for resources for that centre but also to develop an ongoing funding mechanism. I call upon the minister responsible for women's issues and native issues in this province and for the government to respond to the needs of the Native Women's Resource Centre.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Mr. Reycraft: I want to draw to the attention of the Legislature the announcement made in London yesterday by the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston). The minister visited Victoria Hospital and informed Dr. Robert Colcleugh and members of his maxillofacial team that the Ministry of Health would be increasing the program funding of the hospital to allow it to expand its maxillofacial clinic. An additional \$219,700 will be provided in annual operating funds. As well, a capital grant of \$127,800 will allow the hospital to expand the clinic and to equip an additional operating room.

The maxillofacial clinic treats children and adults with severe facial deformities. Dr. Colcleugh and his very fine team rebuild the damaged faces of accident victims and correct a wide range of congenital conditions, such as malfitting jaws, cleft lips and palates and missing cheekbones and chins.

The new facilities and program funding will allow the clinic team to double its annual case load, which currently consists of about 50 major cases. All of us in southwestern Ontario welcome this very significant expansion to the program at Victoria Hospital. It will allow many more children, such as two-year-old Tracy Metzger, whom the minister and I met yesterday at Vic, to look forward to a far brighter future.

TRIP TO WASHINGTON

Mr. Brandt: According to the media, the Premier (Mr. Peterson) has dismissed as ridiculous the suggestion of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Grossman) that the former Premier, the member for Muskoka (Mr. F. S. Miller), accompany him to Washington.

I point out to the Premier that the member for Muskoka, first as Minister of Industry and Trade and then as Premier, was a strong supporter of Ontario in its negotiations with the United States

and is extremely well respected by our neighbours to the south.

No one can deny that the member for Muskoka would lend obvious prestige, knowledge and experience to the Premier's contingent. Therefore, for the Premier to dismiss outright my colleague's participation in the trip to Washington is to demonstrate an incredible contempt and arrogance that has no place in this parliament.

Apparently, when the Premier is not involved in a political manoeuvre, he is happy to take members of the opposition along. For example, the member for Muskoka joined the government's recent mission to China. We can only conclude that the Premier's trip to Washington is politically motivated. It is designed so that only he has whatever information is available and only he speaks to the media on this issue.

In our opinion, this is further proof that the Premier's goal is to manipulate the auto pact, the softwood lumber tariff and pulp and paper discussions for political gain rather than to protect jobs in Ontario. The only job the Premier is trying to protect is his own.

GOLF TOURNAMENT

Mr. Allen: I am sure many members of this Legislature, like me, felt something of a surge of moral outrage this morning, as did I, at reading the Toronto Star report of the Royal Canadian Golf Association's tournament of June 23, 1986, ostensibly to support one of the major charitable drives in the community but which ended in a rather pitiful contribution to that charity, namely, the Oakville-Trafalgar Memorial Hospital.

When all the expenses were tallied, the \$62,400, as best one could calculate, could only have been reduced to about \$36,000, at which point \$6,000 was sent to the hospital, leaving the golf club in possession of something in the order of \$30,800 for its own kitty.

One has to say that when an organization like this abuses not only the charitable legislation of Ontario but also the intended charity, the public and all of us not only by profiting but also by intending to profit substantially from a fundraising drive for a public organization that is publicly supported and charitably supported, all of us must hope that someone will come forward and make a formal complaint to the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) so that action may be taken.

BRAMPTON FESTIVAL

Mr. Callahan: Although the snow is on the ground and this event is held in July, I invite all members of the Legislature to attend the Carab-

ram celebrations in Brampton and will continue to make the announcement, "Come and experience the excellent Ukrainian dancing that takes place in the city of Brampton." I believe that for two years in a row the Ukrainian community has been the winner of the trophy for the best pavilion.

Even though the Ukrainian families in Brampton started out as a very small group under the leadership and guidance of Father Galadzo, they have demonstrated initiative that is unsurpassed. They have purchased land and will be erecting a church. I submit that augurs well for the Ukrainian community in Brampton, and I invite members to Carabram on July 1, 2 and 3.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Jackson: Yesterday the Minister of Skills Development (Mr. Sorbara) announced his summer programs for 1987. They are the same as the summer programs for 1986, which were in turn almost identical to the programs for 1985.

Last February, the minister was chastised for having failed to revise the summer program from the year before, and yesterday this pusillanimous procrastinator struck once again. He says the summer program is a door of opportunity that will help students to further their education, yet all he did was to top up the fund to cover the increased minimum wage. At that rate, a student can work an entire day and still not have enough to buy a single college textbook.

There are many students who need help with the basics, like résumé writing. There is nothing in this program for that. During the election, the Liberal Party promised a job to every young person in Ontario. Once in government, this commitment to summer jobs has been only a 2.5 per cent increase in two years.

Mr. Speaker: That completes members' statements.

MEMBERS' PRIVILEGES

Mr. Gillies: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of privilege: I bring to your attention and that of members of the assembly something that occurred in the standing committee on public accounts this morning.

While the committee was sitting in room 151 on the first floor, an agent representing the law firm of Stikeman, Elliott presented me with some papers. On examination, these papers are a suit of libel in the amount of \$2.7 million. I would like to review the circumstances surrounding this, Mr. Speaker, and ask for your guidance.

First, I would like you to consider section 38 of the Legislative Assembly Act, which I will read for the edification of the House:

"Except for a contravention of this act, a member of the assembly is not liable to arrest, detention or molestation for any cause or matter whatever of a civil nature during a session of the Legislature or during the 20 days preceding or the 20 days following a session."

The item of business before the committee this morning was the Ministry of Housing's convert-to-rent program and, in particular, the award by that program of a \$3.5-million loan to the Huang and Danczkay project. This is a matter I raised in the House last October.

Mr. Speaker, you will recall that the lobbyist representing Huang and Danczkay at the time was Ivan Fleischmann, and indeed, the writ issued against myself, my executive assistant, Ms. Artmont, the Toronto Sun Publishing Corp. and two reporters for that corporation, Mr. Ganley and Ms. Comeau, is a writ put forward by Mr. Fleischmann.

1400

Mr. Speaker, I think it would be well for you to consider the circumstances. Mr. Fleischmann's lawyers wrote me a letter with intent to sue on the day or around the day that I made it clear that the opposition would be forcing this matter into the public accounts committee for the scrutiny of members of this Legislature. Now, some three months later, on the very day the committee is about to undertake the inquiry into this matter, the writ is issued in the committee room to me and to the other people I have named.

This is clearly the grossest intimidation of a member of the assembly attempting to undertake the work that he is here to do that I can recall in my six years in this House. I would say it is contemptuous. I ask you to consider whether it is a breach under section 38, and I ask you later today to review the report of the public accounts committee that will be brought before this assembly at the end of question period.

The public accounts committee unanimously passed a motion asking that this matter be brought to your attention, expressing the outrage of the committee and asking that the matter be referred to the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly. I am very pleased to be able to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that this matter passed unanimously. I thank my colleagues from all three caucuses in the committee for their support and consideration this morning.

I only add that if this is an attempt to intimidate me as a member of the assembly, I want to inform

the members of the House that it will not work. I intend to keep raising matters I consider to be of urgent public importance in this House whether Mr. Fleischmann or anyone else likes it or not.

Mr. Wildman: Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate to you the fact that this morning in the public accounts committee we supported the motion because we consider this to be a most outrageous event, not only because it is an apparent attempt to intimidate the member for Brantford (Mr. Gillies) in his work as a representative of the people of Brantford and as a representative of the people of Ontario, but also because it is an attempt to intimidate the whole public accounts committee in carrying out its responsibilities to survey the public purse and ensure that programs such as the convert-to-rent program are carried out properly and that the people of this province obtain value for money.

By extension, I believe an attempt to harass the public accounts committee is an attempt to harass all members of the Legislative Assembly. Any attempt to serve a writ of suit on an MPP during the Legislative session I believe is improper, if not illegal. I ask you, Mr. Speaker, to review this matter to determine, first, the legality of the attempt to serve a writ on an MPP, not only in this place but also anywhere at any time while the House is in session; and second, what steps should be taken by the assembly to protect MPPs from this type of harassment.

I commend to you the report of the committee that will be presented by the chairman or the acting chairman subsequent to question period and I ask that the assembly act upon it.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I understand that the report of the committee will be dealt with in the proper order of business, perhaps an hour from now. However, since the matter has been raised, I certainly feel that the honourable member in raising the matter is quite correct in indicating that this is an unacceptable procedure as far as the members of this House or of the committee are concerned.

While there may have been an attempt to intimidate, we all know that the opposition parties, as with opposition parties previously, will certainly be far from intimidated by such a procedure. The thing that concerns me is the procedure that was used. I think the committee has acted properly in bringing a report for the consideration of the House. I think it is agreed that when the report comes forward, rather than have a usual adjournment during which time the matter could be considered privately, we should proceed without delay, as has already been

suggested by the House leader for the New Democratic Party and others, and the matter can be debated in the House immediately. Essentially, it will be sent to the Legislative Assembly committee for its consideration and for its recommendation, after due consideration of the whole House with the assistance of Mr. Speaker and his advisers.

Mr. Speaker: The member for Brantford has raised a point of privilege. I thank him for raising it at the earliest convenience, because that is one of the main things that must be done by any member. I understand by the content of his words that he wishes me, as Speaker, to consider the report of the committee, which I understand from all members who have spoken will come before this House so that a decision will be taken. I will accept that request of the honourable member; it will be looked at as soon as the report is brought in by the committee.

ORAL QUESTIONS

TAX REVENUES

Mr. Grossman: I have a question for the Treasurer. I wonder whether the Treasurer can reflect back to the conversation we had last week on the switch-off of the ad valorem tax on gasoline which has caused \$500,000 a day more to be taken out of the motorists of Ontario. Can the Treasurer today specifically outline his aversion to ad valorem taxes?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: This is an appropriate time for a philosophical debate about tax measures, if the Leader of the Opposition wants to raise the matter. It was our feeling that the ad valorem tax as it applied to gasoline meant that the revenue earned from the tax was based on something other than the decision of this House and was dependent only on the price of gasoline.

The member will know that after the imposition of the ad valorem tax, at least during a part of the Treasurership of the Leader of the Opposition, that tax more than doubled during that period. It was my feeling at the time as an opposition spokesman, and later as Treasurer, that it would be more appropriate for gasoline taxes if a fixed tax—in this instance 8.3 cents per litre—were attached to the sale of gasoline and the revenue would then be more readily projected and predicted.

Any change in that revenue would be only at the decision of the members of the Legislative Assembly, acting on the recommendation of the government of the day with the resolution and appropriate signature of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor. I do not apologize for that. I

believe it is appropriate in the taxation of gasoline.

Mr. Grossman: The key thing the Treasurer indicated as his objection was that the tax was dependent on the price of gasoline and therefore the amount of taxation gathered would catapult up or sometimes drop, depending on the price of gasoline, and that he should come back to the House if he wanted to get more revenue when that happened.

The Treasurer will know he has precisely the same system for the land transfer tax. The land transfer tax is an ad valorem tax just as the gasoline tax used to be, but there is one difference. The price of gasoline dropped this year, as everyone knew it would, and that would have produced lower revenues for the government.

On the other hand, the Treasurer knew and knows today that the single item in society that is skyrocketing the fastest in terms of price is land. When he found an opportunity to keep an ad valorem tax on an item that was increasing dramatically in price, thus increasing revenues, the Treasurer not only endorsed and kept that ad valorem tax but also increased the level of taxation with a 20 per cent increase on the tax itself.

Mr. Speaker: The question, please.

Mr. Grossman: How can the Treasurer reconcile the fact that by dropping the ad valorem tax on gasoline he effectively increased the tax on motorists by \$500,000 a day, and that by keeping the ad valorem tax on land he so far has effectively, from his own figures, increased the tax on people who buy land by \$1.5 million per week?

1410

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I want to point out something that is obvious. These changes were approved by majority vote of the Legislature so there was nothing undemocratic about the approach. I also want to point out two additional things. It is not our policy, nor was it the policy specifically of the previous administration, to earmark funds. However, we must be aware that the cost of providing adequate transportation facilities has increased since the change in government with the award of more dollars for this purpose. The same is also true of the costs of servicing land and new developments in many communities across Ontario, but I suppose most spectacularly in the greater Metropolitan Toronto area, some of the areas of which are probably the fastest growing areas in North America.

The honourable member, having been Treasurer and being a sensible person in most instances, will know the costs of these services and the planning associated with them, such as the provision of schools, roads and adequate electrical services—the list goes on—is mounting rapidly. The member will also be aware that we have a responsibility to pay for these services and that we have taken some tough and, I suppose, unpopular taxation decisions.

The member has repeatedly put a price tag of an additional \$700 million per year on the tax changes this government has brought in. That number, if anything, is conservative; I do not suppose that is a pejorative adjective in this instance. We feel the money is required to fulfil our responsibilities properly.

Mr. Grossman: Let us be serious. Let us not plead poverty as if the Treasurer needs this money. He admitted that after six months he had \$400 million in additional revenue. He admitted in this House last week that this was also a conservative estimate and that he will shortly be admitting that he has more than \$400 million in additional revenue. He admitted yesterday in the House that the \$100-million high-tech fund this year will spend less than \$1 million, so he will end up with \$99 million in additional money on top of the \$400 million and on top of the excess he has indicated is yet to be announced. That is another \$99 million. Let us not plead poverty when it comes to his great need to gouge the motorists of this province by \$500,000 a day and the people who try to buy houses in this province by \$1.5 million a week.

Given the enormous increase in revenues the Treasurer has and given his admitted increase, unexpected he said, of at least \$400 million plus more, plus another \$99 million, is he prepared to rethink his double standard on ad valorem taxes and get rid of his tax changes on gasoline or perhaps save the home owners of this province \$1.5 million a week?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The tax changes the Leader of the Opposition has been criticizing so severely have not impeded the economic development and growth of the province in a most spectacular way. I do not take credit for that. I simply point out that the taxation and economic policies of this government have not hindered this expansion and that the revenue increases are welcome indeed. They mean we are able to finance, in a progressive and useful way, a number of programs that have been seriously underfinanced in the past.

I point to the improved financing for education, at the elementary and secondary levels as well as at the post-secondary level. I am glad to report to the member, if he has not noticed it, that we have received a good many congratulations from the people who have been in receipt of these funds and who perhaps are more objective in assessing these matters than is the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Speaker: New question, the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Grossman: Let it be recorded that the Treasurer thinks that an almost \$1-billion tax increase does not adversely affect the growth of the economy.

Mr. Speaker: Is the question to the Treasurer?

Mr. Grossman: We will talk about this some time.

RADIOACTIVE SOIL

Mr. Grossman: My question is for the Minister of Housing, who will recall that when he took office, he immediately announced he was going to look after the houses in Malvern that were located on radioactive soil. I wonder whether the minister can today tell us how he justifies the situation where, instead of buying all 100 homes in that area, he has agreed to buy 40? In some instances, he has decided to buy one half of a townhouse and refused to buy the other townhouse immediately abutting and adjoining it. Does the radioactive soil somehow have such a careful demarcation that he is prepared to buy one home and leave the children and the families next door without the protection he offers?

Hon. Mr. Curling: The honourable member has indicated a situation that was outstanding for years during the time of the previous government. No one addressed that issue, because it was thought to be too controversial. We addressed that and identified the homes that, as indicated by scientists, knowledgeable people, had higher than normal levels of radioactive soil. They identified 40 of those homes, and we went there and bought.

As to the one half of a townhouse the honourable leader mentioned, I would have to look into that. Maybe the other home that was not bought was one that was not identified as being at a level that would be acquired by us.

Mr. Grossman: These are the minister's constituents. He did announce he would solve the problem. I have here the map of the houses he decided to buy and the ones he did not. He will see there are lots of rows of townhouses. In some

cases, he just took one and left the other half unpurchased.

The minister has to be taking the position that if one lives on one half of a 40-foot lot, the government ought to buy one's home because the soil is radioactive and children should not be living there but that the adjacent house is safe. To compound the problem, the minister has also put up for rent the house he bought and invited another family to move into it.

The one half of a house he decided was too unsafe to live in, and therefore bought, he is now advertising for rent. He is saying that if people will just drop by and buy one of these radioactive soil houses, which he is happy to sell, a copy of the radiological survey will be available upon request.

Mr. Speaker: Is that your question?

Mr. Grossman: How can the minister justify this double standard in his own constituency, inviting families to move into houses he had to buy because the soil was so radioactive?

Hon. Mr. Curling: There is no double standard at all. The member knows that as a government we still feel that the levels of radioactivity are safe. As I stated to him, that conclusion was given by scientists who are knowledgeable; it was not my conclusion but that of experts. The residents there had no option. We gave them an option. We had nothing to hide. We made available to them the result that was available to us, so they could make that decision. We still maintain it is safe.

The member is using the logic that we should also buy the adjoining lots that have a low reading and are behind the ones with radioactive soil. Is he saying we should buy all those, not 40 but maybe 80? Where do we stop? We identified those that showed a higher reading.

Mr. Grossman: Our position is that the minister bought 40 of the homes in this subdivision. Most of the homes he bought are now empty and most of the other people cannot get any price for their homes, since he has not bought their homes. They are living in the middle of a vacant, deserted subdivision, thanks to his purchase and thanks to what he has done. He has left the other 60 abandoned and without protection.

1420

In response to this ad in the newspaper, we sent someone over to visit the government. We asked for a copy of the radiological survey for houses the ministry is prepared to rent, which it says have no danger. This is what the govern-

ment officials told our people. They said the reports contained "technical jargon," that we as prospective purchasers "really would not be able to understand it" and that anyway, "you really do not need it."

How can the minister explain leaving 60 home owners living in the middle of an abandoned subdivision, reducing the price of their homes and then telling the people who go in and try to rent the houses the ministry has already declared unsafe that the report is too technical and they would not understand it?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I am happy. It is about time that party decided to send someone over to investigate. For years, the Conservatives sat there and did nothing. We addressed the problem and gave those residents an option on which to move, gave them all those options. The Conservatives sat on it for years and we acted on it.

We still maintain the soil is safe. The reason we gave those individuals the option is we felt they had nowhere to go, because their prices had been depressed. We bought those—

Mr. Grossman: Why do you not listen to the tenants?

Hon. Mr. Curling: That is the same attitude the Conservatives used when they investigated the radioactive soil. They did not listen to the residents there; they listened to no one. They do not even want to hear the answer now. We acted and we will continue to act.

Mr. Rae: We should bring back Tom Wells to mediate this dispute.

RENT REVIEW

Mr. Rae: I also have a question of the Minister of Housing. Can the minister explain why, under Bill 51, John Woodford, a tenant at 1229 Marlborough Court in Oakville is going to have to pay an 18.1 per cent rent increase beginning March 2, because his rental increase notice was given on December 2, 1986? Can the minister tell Mr. Woodford why he has been told by the ministry that, regardless of what the rental review hearing ultimately finds, legally he has to pay up front an 18.1 per cent increase on March 2?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I presume the member is talking about an individual in a post-1975 building which has never been covered under the rent review process before. The notice that individual got was before December 31, 1986; therefore, he will have to pay that increase. However, as soon as the landlord makes his application for that increase and the case is heard

by the Rent Review Hearings Board, the landlord will have to justify that increase.

The other point the member raised was why should the tenant be paying that. With regard to the rate which has been established, the guideline, 5.2 per cent, if the landlord does not get it increased at the Rent Review Hearings Board, then the money paid in excess of that will be refunded to the tenant.

Mr. Rae: Perhaps the minister is happy to justify Mr. Woodford having to make an interest-free loan to his landlord, which is part of the deal the minister and Bill Grenier signed. No wonder Bill Grenier is smiling all the way to the bank: the minister has given it all away to him.

Perhaps the minister can also explain to the 25 tenants, mainly seniors, who live at 82 Millside Drive in Milton, Ontario, who also received notices of an increase in late 1986, with the rent increases taking effect in the first three months of 1987, why they have to make an interest-free loan to their landlord simply because the minister is not prepared to stick up for tenants? Is that the reason they have to pay that interest-free loan to the landlord?

Hon. Mr. Curling: Not at all. We protected the tenants. We have brought about a very fair rent review process. It was agreed by landlords and tenants that this would be the case. There will be other cases where a landlord would apply for an increase and then basically would claim that interest would be due on the money owed to him. It is agreed by the landlord and tenant that this will be the situation.

I think it is on a one-time basis. I do not think this will happen again. It is this new law coming in at this time that will put those tenants in that position.

Mr. Rae: Let us explain to tenants then exactly what is happening, because the Ministry of Housing is so confused that, at one point, one of its officials advised tenants to phone the member for Riverdale (Mr. Reville), our Housing critic, because the official thought he might have a better idea of what the law actually said than they did.

Mr. Foulds: They were right.

Mr. Rae: They were right about that.

Do we understand the minister to be saying that if a landlord in a post-1976 building simply wants to get hold of some cheap, quick, interest-free money, all he has to do with respect to a rental increase is to go to his tenants prior to the increase being set by the rent review hearing and say: "All right, pay 25, 30, 35 or 40 per cent

up front. You have to pay it or I will give an eviction notice"? That is what many landlords are saying to their tenants. Does the minister not appreciate the injustice of what is going on? Can he tell us why he will not bring in a speedy amendment to Bill 51, which we will pass in 24 hours, to see that tenants are protected from this type of Liberal ripoff, which he himself responds to?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I hope the honourable member understands this. A notice that is given for an increase does not necessarily say that the tenant has to pay it. The landlord would then have to make representation to the Rent Review Hearings Board for that increase. The member also knows that landlord would have to justify that increase.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Curling: As well, that tenant would have to reside in a post-1975 building. He himself cannot give notice just like that. That increase has to be justified to the Rent Review Hearings Board.

Mr. Rae: To be charitable, the minister is misinformed, but no doubt he will be hearing more about this.

WATER QUALITY

Mr. Rae: I have a question for the Minister of the Environment. The minister will be aware of a spill that took place on the St. Clair River on Monday of 500,000 litres of chemically polluted excess from C-I-L. Can the minister explain why the Ministry of the Environment failed to notify either the public officials or the public in Wallaceburg of the presence of a chemical plume in the river that was passing by their water supply?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I recall seeing a report on that. It was my understanding that there was notification given in that incident. The member seems to have some different information, but that was my understanding. In fact, there was a shutdown of the intake of the plant while the plume went by. This is my understanding of it from a report I have. If the member has other information he would like to share with me, I will be pleased to investigate.

1430

Mr. Rae: So the minister will know exactly what happened, the town engineer and the water commission were informed, which was why, as he stated, the intake was effective. The minister should know that publicly elected councillors

and the general public in Wallaceburg were not informed. Those are the facts of the situation.

Can the minister tell us why he has yet to reach a decision on a problem that has been on his desk for well over a year, with respect to the construction of a new pipeline so the residents of Wallaceburg will no longer be dependent upon water from the St. Clair River? He uses the excuse of going to the feds when he knows they are not going to kick in the money. When are the citizens of Wallaceburg going to get action from the government of Ontario with respect to their water supply and the building of a new pipeline?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: As the leader of the third party will know, the government has indeed given a commitment to participate financially in this project.

Mr. Rae: You have to get your facts correct.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: No; it has. The leader of the third party has to get his facts right. We have given that commitment. I was in Wallaceburg and announced that particular commitment. I simply indicated that with respect to the portion that would be the responsibility of the municipality, if the municipality wished to have the federal government alleviate part of that portion, it was welcome to discuss this with the federal government. I will certainly support them in that regard. There is a commitment on the part of the provincial government to do so, and I do not know why the member is suggesting that there is not.

Mrs. Grier: What has become of all the minister's grand promises about a drinking water strategy for this province? In November 1985, when I introduced safe drinking water legislation, he indicated he was going to do something to put in place legislation that would require notification of people when their drinking water was being contaminated so citizens could make their own decisions on whether the drinking water was safe and whether they should drink it. Can the minister explain why there has been no action on his part to legislate for safe drinking water in Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I guess the member feels—and she is entitled to her opinion—that legislation will necessarily produce safe drinking water for Ontario. The strategy we have adopted is to ensure we get at some of the sources of contamination that exist around Ontario. We are aggressively pursuing those sources of contamination. Relating it specifically to her leader's question, because I know she wants it to be a supplementary, I think the member agrees that is

one important component of dealing with those kinds of issues.

In addition, we have promised and delivered a surveillance program which continues to test the water to determine whether there are contaminants, and if there are, to what degree those contaminants would be in the water. In addition, the Ministry of the Environment has initiated a plant optimization program, which calls for an improvement not only in the equipment used in these water treatment plants but also in the training of the staff that operates them so we can get maximum efficiency out of them.

We are doing so right across Ontario. It is the responsibility of the Ministry of the Environment to provide that information. We are always prepared to do so.

TECHNOLOGY FUND

Mr. Gillies: My question is to the Premier. This week, when the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) announced to the House that the Exploracom commitment would not be met by the government, he said the cabinet decision had been based on external reviews. On external review, it was found that even if the private sector did come up with \$17.5 million, this would be insufficient and more government funding, in excess of the \$17.5 million, would be required. We are mystified about why this was not evident to the Premier when the announcement was made last year. Will he share with the House the nature of the external review, who conducted it and at what cost? Is he prepared to table it before the House?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: We have discussed these matters before and have shared them with the honourable member opposite. There were many external reviews of the situation by lawyers, accountants and others, and we came to the conclusion we did. I am not sure how we could further elucidate the question for the member. Is he in favour of it or against it? Is he in favour of getting into it or getting out of it? What is his position on the matter?

Mr. Gillies: The issue is, because of the Premier's colossal mishandling of this matter, based on the fact that there are now 42 employees of Exploracom talking about lawsuits, this matter could and possibly will end up costing the taxpayers money. We believe the members of this House have a right to know the basis on which the original commitment was made and the basis on which it was reneged. The Premier may not think this is necessary to share with the House; we believe it is. Will he table the external reviews?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: As I recall, the honourable member asked for a lot of information before and it was provided. There has been a great deal of information on this matter and it has been shared with this House. We shared that with the member; there is no particular secret. As the Treasurer said some time ago, the information gathered in the external review led us to the conclusion that it was not forthcoming in the short term. We have run into operating difficulties as well. That is why we made the decision that we did, and we were quite comfortable making it.

RENT REVIEW

Mr. Reville: I have a question for the Minister of Housing to see whether we can deal with the obfuscation here. I want to go back to the four people in Millside Towers in Milton, and I want the minister to understand what he has allowed to have happen to those tenants.

On December 31, 1985, those tenants were paying \$500 a month. On January 1, 1987, the minister has required them to pay \$632.50 a month. That is a 26.5 per cent increase, in a situation where he said it was going to be four per cent in 1986 and 5.2 per cent in 1987. By the time we have a rent review hearing and perhaps an appeal, those tenants will have given their landlord interest-free for 21 months the sum of \$132.50 a month.

Mr. Speaker: Is your question, "Does the minister agree"?

Mr. Reville: Is there any possible way the minister can justify such absurdity, in view of his comment about wanting to protect the tenants of Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Curling: When Bill 51 came about, it was to address and include all tenants in private rental units across Ontario. As the honourable member knows, those post-1975 rental units were not in the rent review process. We indicated very clearly that we will include the post-1975 units retroactive to August 1, 1985, and those will be paying four per cent until we get Bill 51 through.

In our democratic way, we went around the province and heard from all sides, and then we said the next rent review guideline would be related to inflation. That was announced previous to 1987 at 5.2 per cent.

As the honourable member said, those tenants would have paid a retroactive increase of whatever percentage rate he indicated. When they go before the Rent Review Hearing Board, it will look at four per cent from August 1, 1985,

and at 5.2 per cent. If that landlord can justify an increase over and above that, then that will be done; if not, the money will be refunded.

Mr. Reville: How does the minister imagine he is going to be able to find the people currently living in Millside Towers to tell them he has protected them when they are going to be economically evicted? Does he know a senior citizen who has had a 26.5 per cent increase in his or her income since December 31, 1985? Why is he condoning the economic eviction of tenants in this province?

Hon. Mr. Curling: If I were condoning economic eviction, I would not have made the legislation retroactive at four per cent. If that were the case, we would not have made a guideline that is sensitive to inflation.

Again, the notice those tenants got on December 31 was for 90 days; so no money would have been expended from their pockets until 90 days thereafter. It is a peculiar situation only for those tenants who got notices in December; those tenants who got them after January 1 would not be in that position.

It is not an economic eviction. The third party is behaving in a sensational way to scare those tenants. We have put in a rent review process to protect tenants.

1440

TRANSIT SERVICES

Mr. Callahan: I was speaking with one of the assistants to the member for Sudbury East (Mr. Martel). It was drawn to my attention that a number of constituents in my riding of Brampton are being ticketed by the police because of a lack of parking facilities for the GO Transit facility in downtown Brampton.

Mr. Speaker: The question is to which minister?

Mr. Callahan: Brampton is probably one of the largest-growing areas in the province. Accordingly, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Transportation and Communications as to what steps, if any, might be anticipated with reference to obtaining further parking spaces for constituents of mine who park at the downtown GO service.

Hon. Mr. Fulton: I appreciate the member for Brampton's ongoing concern for the provision and enhancement of GO service. During the lunch hour, I was apprised by our friend the member for Sudbury East about some tickets to his friends, or probably to staff. The problem is similar at other stations along the GO service

from growing use of that service by the public in Ontario. Some of these problems have been rectified. I assure the member for Brampton that I will take it upon myself to deal as quickly as possible with the officials from GO to see whether we can remedy the problem he has raised.

TECHNOLOGY FUND

Mr. Gillies: My question is again for the Premier. We on this side of the House are not at all satisfied with the answer the Premier has given. I am going to ask the same question again. He has staff and resources at the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology totalling about \$200 million. Apparently, those resources were not sufficient for his government to come to a decision about the Exploracom project, so he undertook an external review at further public expense and he is not prepared to table that review in the House. Will the Premier live up to his commitment to open government and table that report?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: We share our decisions with the member and we share our thinking with him on these matters. We have done that in the past and we will do it in the future. The member knows and I know that government operates on the basis of advice from a variety of people when it makes its decisions. He is welcome to scrutinize it and look at it in any way he wants to. He can take it to committees or do whatever he likes. There is no particular problem.

We are very mindful of our responsibility to protect the public purse and we are doing that. This government is not afraid to make some of the tough decisions that it has to make. We are not going to get involved in another Minaki Lodge situation. We have spent half our time cleaning up messes they created. Had they used a little more judgement, we would not have had to do it.

Mr. Gillies: In the absence of any better information, which the leader of the open Liberal government of Ontario refuses to share with this House, we are left with the ongoing impression that the Premier, as leader of the government, precipitately made the decision to fund a \$17.5-million commitment for a project led by a personal friend of his. He knows how this looks and yet he refuses to share the substantive information with this House. Does the Premier not understand this is unacceptable? It is disgraceful, and he should bring the information before the scrutiny of all the members of this House immediately.

Mr. Speaker: New question.

Mr. Gillies: What about an answer?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: What about a question?

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Gillies: You have a question. You throw this money around. You will not account for it. You will not bring it into the House. What is the matter with you?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: There is nothing the matter with me. What is the matter with you?

Mr. Gillies: You are an absolute sleaze.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Will the member for Brantford take his seat.

Mr. Andrewes: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: We did not hear the Premier's answer to the member's question, so I assume we are to assume there is no external review.

Mr. Speaker: That is not a point of order. There is nothing in the standing orders that says anyone has to answer a question.

Mr. Gillies: That is right; he will not answer.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Would the honourable members allow the member for Hamilton West to ask a question?

FRENCH-LANGUAGE EDUCATION

M. Allen: J'ai une question pour le ministre de l'Éducation. Ce matin, j'ai lu le rapport de la Commission Roy, qui a proposé un conseil scolaire pour la région d'Ottawa-Carleton. Nous, Néo-Démocrates, voulons assurer la communauté franco-ontarienne de notre appui dans ce dossier.

I wonder whether the minister recognizes, as I am sure he must, that this is a major and complex undertaking with many possible consequences, not the least of them financial, for the many boards involved. Will he introduce legislation in the coming spring session that will follow the implementation timetable of the commission? Will he assure us now that he will provide not only the financial necessities to provide equality of education for the French students of the new board but also the special financial assistance that will be necessary to the other boards to enable them to make the transition without loss to their programming for their students?

Hon. Mr. Conway: I thank the member for Hamilton West for his question and for drawing the attention of the House to the release today in Ottawa of the report of the Ottawa-Carleton French-Language Education Advisory Committee, which committee has tabled a series of recommendations representing advice to the

government. I can assure the honourable member that I received the report this week and have read it carefully. Over the course of the next while, I will be analysing the several recommendations with officials within my department.

I can assure the member that this government is very serious about its commitment to establish a French-language board in the Ottawa-Carleton area for the fall of 1988. That will obviously require legislation. At a point not too far in the future, I hope to introduce that legislation in this House so that all members and the community will have the opportunity to assess very carefully this very important and historic initiative that this new government is taking with respect to this critical question of French-language education in the national capital area. I am sure the honourable member will want to join me at that time for a full and open discussion of the bill and its many ramifications.

Ms. Gigantes: Given that the committee has underlined the financial problems that will be created for some boards in the area now that the francophone board will be established, I ask again the question asked by the member for Hamilton West. What kind of financial commitment can we look for in the Ottawa-Carleton area that can mean the remaining boards are going to be viable, and how is the minister going to provide information and reassurance to the people of Ottawa-Carleton on the financial question when there does not seem to be a specific recommendation coming out of the advisory committee's report?

1450

Hon. Mr. Conway: The specific how of this matter, how we will create a French-language board in Ottawa-Carleton for the fall of 1988, will be worked out in the coming months, taking into account the advice of the learned committee which has reported today.

We will also take into account the very important, and I expect constructive, advice of the member for Ottawa-Centre (Ms. Gigantes), the member for Hamilton West (Mr. Allen) and all others in this assembly and outside who have an important and significant interest and involvement in this timely matter of public policy.

Mr. Davis: I am glad to see the Minister of Education acknowledged that a major report was issued today. It seems the new tack of a government that has openness and no windows is to announce brand-new, major initiatives anywhere but in this House so that questions cannot be asked.

The first recommendation of this committee, which I will read into the record, is "that the Ottawa-Carleton French-language school board have two sections: a Roman Catholic section and a public section." Does the minister support that recommendation?

Hon. Mr. Conway: Let me say at the outset I appreciate the member for Scarborough Centre's recognition that this government is an open government with no walls and no barriers.

That testimony is in sharp contrast with what the Hamilton Spectator reports today about the leader of the Ontario Conservative Party. The Spectator reports today that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Grossman) is prepared to "tell Hamilton doctors how to handle Elston, but only in private with nobody present from the media." That is not the kind of open-door policy this government believes in.

The report today contains some 74 recommendations, all of which are interesting and important and will be carefully assessed by the minister and the government as we go forward in the coming months in a consultative way to put in place a French-language board in the national capital area for 1988.

Mr. Sterling: Although the Minister of Education refused to answer my colleague's question, he managed to put the major recommendation, recommendation 1, in his press release.

According to this report, the number of trustees who will be elected in each of the two sections, the Roman Catholic section and the public section, will be determined by the number of francophone electors who opt for one section or the other. Suffice to say one group will be represented by more trustees than the other.

The report goes on to say the combined group will decide on the jurisdiction of the sections and the whole board. Why would the majority of the board delegate any power to the underling section if it was taking away from what the majority could do to either side of the sections?

Mr. Speaker: Minister.

Mr. Sterling: My question is—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Will the member take his seat. The question was asked very clearly.

Hon. Mr. Conway: I say to my friend from Manotick I appreciate his interest in this report. As he is one of the members from the national capital area, I know that he, like all others in the assembly, will want to look very carefully, as I will be looking in the coming weeks, at the report in whole and in specific.

We are going to take into consideration the advice tendered by the commissioners. As we move forward in the coming weeks to prepare the legislation, I can assure the member we will take into account these recommendations and the advice that will be tendered by many others in the community. Not too many weeks or months hence we as a government will be introducing a bill into this assembly. We hope it will address a number of the concerns the member and others have properly raised here today, the day of the tabling of the so-called Roy committee report.

PROGRAM FUNDING

Mr. Allen: I have a question on another subject for the Minister of Education. This morning I received word from his ministry that its learning materials development plan committee had not recommended—had opposed, in fact—the granting of support moneys to the film group that is documenting the travels across this country of the Students Against Global Extinction group, which has been so effective in our high schools.

First, I want to say I regret that. I want to call the minister's attention to a recent study by Dr. Ross Parker of McMaster, which documents that, among students in secondary schools in 20 communities across this country, the only thing they fear more than the threat of nuclear extermination and nuclear war is their own parents' death. Everything else is much subsidiary to that.

In the light of the seriousness of this question in the eyes of young people themselves, can the minister not find in this ministry some other vehicle for providing support for documenting a valuable tool that can be used in the classrooms of this province and this country with those young people and their concerns?

Hon. Mr. Conway: The honourable member has raised this issue with me privately. As Minister of Education and on behalf of the government, I feel very strongly that our school system has a very important role to play in ensuring that our young people are properly schooled in these important matters. A great deal has been done and is currently being done.

I will take the member's suggestion under active consideration and look very seriously at what might be done to respond to his request. I do not have the file with me about the learning materials development plan to which he makes specific reference, but I will look to see whether it might be possible to address this specific matter

in some other fashion and report back to him personally in the very near future.

Mr. Allen: I appreciate the minister undertaking that task and I look forward to hearing from him shortly.

It was not long ago—in fact, early last fall—that reports came to us of a third board in the province—only a third—developing a major curriculum unit on the question of nuclear awareness. The Ottawa and Toronto boards have done that, and the Waterloo regional board is the third board to undertake that task.

At that time, the minister indicated he would be monitoring the project carefully and was looking forward to the possibility of recommending that program to other boards in the province. Has he monitored that program and is he actively in the process of seconding it to other boards with his strong recommendation for its use?

Hon. Mr. Conway: We have been monitoring that program. In the here and now, I cannot give an immediate report to the member.

Mr. Laughren: What about the hereafter?

Hon. Mr. Conway: I am glad to see my friend the member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Laughren) participating, albeit parenthetically, in this question period. I will, however, undertake to report—

Mr. Laughren: The minister mentioned the hereafter, and I am there.

Hon. Mr. Conway: I do not know why it is that the New Democratic Party in this assembly or elsewhere in this province is worried about the hereafter.

Ms. Gigantes: That is when the government is going to produce all the solutions.

Mr. McClellan: That is when it is going to fulfil its promises.

Hon. Mr. Conway: Are they concerned about the next consultation? I was in Chelmsford and Chappleau recently. I say to the member for Nickel Belt—

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Does the minister have a response?

Hon. Mr. Conway: We will undertake to report back to the member on the particular and current status of our monitoring of that program.

RENTAL ACCOMMODATION

Mr. Rowe: I have a question for the minister for assured housing. According to a recent news report, the 120 units allocated for the city of Barrie under his Renterprise program have been taken off the market, resulting in the loss of 48

low-income housing units in an important community in my riding. With a zero per cent vacancy rate in the city of Barrie, we simply cannot afford to lose any new units. Can the minister confirm or deny the allegations made in the radio report this week?

Hon. Mr. Curling: Barrie is an area that is suffering terribly, and the vacancy rate is extremely low. I know how difficult it is in that area. We are trying our best to address the issue of getting affordable rental units there.

I cannot report to him on the Renterprise program immediately. I am not quite sure whether those that were taken off were able to meet the criteria. I do not know why. If the member wants me to report directly to him, I can look into it and get back to him on those specific programs.

1500

Mr. Rowe: I am sure the residents of Barrie will be completely assured by that response; they will sleep comfortably tonight. However, it does not explain why the real estate agents in Barrie are actively seeking buyers for this new apartment unit. Perhaps the minister should review the status of this project again.

In the meantime, perhaps the minister can tell me how he intends to replace the eight Ontario Housing Corp. units in Barrie that have also been taken off the market because of the complete failure of his assured housing program in my community. The 310 needy families on the waiting list for subsidized housing in Barrie would appreciate knowing the answer.

Hon. Mr. Curling: Again, I can get back to the member about the specific eight cases that have been taken off in Barrie and tell him the reason they were taken off. I do not know.

I would like to tell the member, though, that our assured housing policy has brought much more assured housing for many people who have been in a waiting situation for years and years. For years to come, we will satisfy quite a few of those who will be waiting.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr. Mackenzie: I have a question of the Minister of Health. He will be aware that the steering committee of the Hamilton Regional Occupational Health and Safety Centre, headed by the president of Local 1005, the safety and health committee of the local and the labour council, with the endorsement of the Ontario Federation of Labour, made a detailed submission to this government on July 5, 1985, for funding for such a clinic. There has been no

action on this in spite of many letters and phone calls since then to both this ministry and the Ministry of Labour.

I wonder whether the minister can give us and the workers involved some indication of when they will hear further about the funding of that clinic in Hamilton.

Hon. Mr. Elston: The honourable gentleman indicated that a detailed submission was made to our government. I am not sure whether it was directed to me. I can check into what has happened with respect to that.

I cannot tell him the status of that application at this moment, but I will extend every effort to find out where that application is and what its status is within my own ministry and within the ministry of my colleague the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye).

Mr. Mackenzie: I do not want to be provocative, but back at the end of August, the minister's colleague the Minister of Labour—and there has been a dispute all along as to whom they should be dealing with—informed the president of Local 1005 that he would arrange a meeting with the two ministries and any other appropriate people within a matter of a short period of time. That was the end of August. There has not been a word since then from the ministry.

That is one of the reasons I am asking whether the minister can be a little more definitive about when they are going to hear something from one of the two ministries.

Hon. Mr. Elston: I can tell the honourable gentleman that my interest is very high in undertakings of this sort, but that under our current legislative framework we have an obligation to share responsibilities with other ministries when there are some rather unusual requests for funding opportunities, such as setting up programs which border on the two ministries.

We can co-ordinate our efforts on these types of matters, and I will extend my efforts to co-ordinate our response. I cannot tell the member what communications there were from another minister at another time, but I can tell him my contact with the Minister of Labour will be done as soon as he returns from his operation. We will communicate jointly and directly with the member for Hamilton East with respect to its status. We will then, I hope, pick up on the communications that occurred in August just past.

PROTECTION FOR HOME BUYERS

Mr. Cousens: I have a question for the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Rela-

tions. Why does he not institute a cooling-off period for new home buyers when they buy a new home?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I thank the member for his question. The reason I would not is that I would have a lot of builders who would try to lynch me if I did so. The member is addressing a problem that is happening in only a very few areas. There are other areas in Ontario where builders are trying to sell their homes, trying to pay their mortgages and pay off their loans, and are very anxious to sell those houses. What the member is suggesting is a problem that affects a very small number of people. We are addressing that problem. However, it would be considerable overkill if we took the member's route on a normal house sale.

Mr. Cousens: I do not know where the minister will get lynched, because no one in this fine House would ever even think of being so physical.

Mr. Speaker: I am glad to hear it.

Mr. Cousens: There is a 10-day cooling-off period for condominium buyers. They at least have 10 days to cool off, think about it, consult with their lawyer and work out the process of the decision with other people to make sure the decision is right. If we can do it for a person who is buying a condominium, why can we not have something such as a 10-day cooling-off period for people who make the largest investment of their lifetime when buying a new home?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: It is a different situation when one is purchasing a condominium. One has to wait for registration. There is a possibility the condominium may never be registered, and then one is confronted with a situation where one is renting instead of buying.

We are in a very hot market in certain areas of Ontario—though not all areas—and we are addressing that problem. If the member looks at what has been happening in the past couple of weeks since we made our announcement, with the advent of the new provisions under the Ontario New Home Warranty Program and the initiatives that have been put into effect by the building industry itself, we are resolving most of the problems. I am sure there are still a couple of problems out there, but by and large, we are addressing most of them and it is working quite well.

PETITIONS

NATUROPATHY

Mr. Newman: I have a petition from Alan J. Bell, doctor of chiropractic and naturopathy. It reads as follows:

"To the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Whereas it is our constitutional right to have available and to choose the health care system of our preference;

"And whereas naturopathy has had self-governing status in Ontario for more than 42 years;

"We petition the Ontario Legislature to call on the government to introduce legislation that would guarantee naturopaths the right to practise their art and science to the fullest without prejudice or harassment."

It is signed by 20 residents.

Mr. Speaker: May I remind many members that the House is in session. It is very difficult to hear what is taking place while we are in place with all the private conversations.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Mr. Barlow from the standing committee on public accounts presented the committee's report and moved the adoption of its recommendations:

Your committee begs to report the incident of the attempted serving of the member for Brantford (Mr. Gillies), a member of the standing committee on public accounts, with a writ during the proceedings of the committee this morning.

Your committee recommends the referral of this matter to the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly for investigation and report to the House as soon as possible.

In view of the fact that the standing committee on public accounts feels so strongly that it cannot be interfered with in the conduct of its business, your committee recommends strongly to the committee to which the matter is referred that it consider the engagement of legal counsel to assist Mr. Gillies in defending himself against legal action arising from this matter.

1510

Mr. Barlow: The entire committee this morning felt this was an attempt, via an attempt to serve a writ on one of our members, to intimidate not only that particular—

Interjection.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I wonder whether the member for High Park-Swansea (Mr. Shymko) could contain himself. This is a committee report we are having.

Mr. Barlow: We felt it was not only an attempt to intimidate the member for Brantford but also an attempt to intimidate the whole of the committee, the whole of the House, and indeed the entire political process, by serving a writ in a committee in the way in which that writ was served. The entire committee felt very strongly about this; thus the report that was presented to the House a few minutes ago.

Mr. Speaker: Mr. Barlow has moved the adjournment of the debate.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: Under our rules the member has acted precisely correctly. The adjournment presumably would give an opportunity for the House to consider the motion, but since it is a reference of a matter that is very timely, if there are some remarks to be said on the matter, perhaps by unanimous consent it might be appropriate that they be said at this time and that the reference to the committee take place without further delay. We have no objection to that, although I would like to say something on the matter if there is unanimous consent to proceed.

Mr. Speaker: Is there unanimous consent?

Agreed to.

Mr. Wildman: I will speak very briefly since I made some comments about this matter earlier. As the mover of the initial motion this morning in the public accounts committee, I think I spoke for all members of the committee—this was demonstrated in that my motion passed unanimously—when I indicated our outrage at the apparent attempt by legal counsel and individuals outside the assembly to influence the activities of a member of the House and of the committee and of the entire committee in carrying out its responsibilities.

The committee believes it is completely unacceptable for this type of intimidation or harassment to be attempted on any member of the Legislature. It believes this is not only an attempt to affect the member for Brantford in his work in this Legislature and its committees but also an attempt to influence the activities of all members of the committee in perhaps making it more difficult for members of the committee to ask legitimate questions about the operation of the convert-to-rent program, a matter that is quite legitimately before the committee.

I also believe, as a member of the public accounts committee, that by extension it is an attempt to harass and intimidate all members of the Legislative Assembly. I think all members of

the House will agree that this is completely unacceptable.

I raise the question of the legality of attempting to serve a writ on a member of this House when the House is in session. It is my understanding that this is not acceptable and is not allowed. If possible, Mr. Speaker, I would like you to investigate and to inform the members of the House of your understanding of the rules with regard to whether a member of the House can be served a writ while the House is in session, or for that matter, 30 days prior to a session and 30 days subsequent to a session. I do not believe that can be done.

Whether or not it is legal, we still have to deal with the problem of a situation where individuals outside this House apparently have attempted to intimidate members of the House in their work and to influence the work of a committee of this Legislature. I moved the motion to refer this matter to the House and to recommend that it be referred to the Legislative Assembly committee to investigate and report back to the House as soon as possible. Subsequently, a motion was moved as well that the committee might consider the hiring of legal counsel to assist it in its work and the member who has been most directly affected by the attempt to serve this writ.

I should point out for members of the House who are not members of the committee that the motion is worded in such a way that the committee, if it goes to the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly, should only consider that. It does not in any way attempt to direct that committee to do that or not to do it, one way or the other.

Be that as it may, we view this as a very grave matter, something that we believe all members of the House should take direct interest in and something that should be dealt with by the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly as soon as possible.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The members of the government party certainly support the motion that has been put before the House in these rather unusual circumstances. It is not the first time an honourable member has been served with a writ while the House was in session or in the precincts of the House in those circumstances. The honourable members may be able to cast their minds back to similar circumstances wherein substantial objections were raised in the House and appropriate action was taken. Therefore, we firmly support the reference.

Without being critical in any way of the words as they are drawn here in this motion, I am sure

all members would agree that in the recommendation that the committee consider the retention of counsel, and I believe the words are "to assist Mr. Gillies in defending himself against legal action arising from this matter," the matter referred to is the process of serving the writ and not the contents of the writ, should it ever be found to have been properly served or should it be served again in other circumstances, in which case other matters would prevail.

I just want to raise something, however, that is not directly appropriate in this case but that would affect us all. As honourable members, we are in no way immune from criminal action, of course; this is not what we are discussing here. On the other hand, as our sessions grow in length, particularly at the federal level, where the House seems to be in session almost all the time, when you have 20 days before and 20 days after, it is possible in the long run that our sessions would be such that all of us would be immune from the serving of writs entirely. This is not directly applicable to the case involved here, but in general it might be worth while for the committee, when it is taking time to review this specific thing, to give us the benefit of its advice on that more general matter.

Certainly we support the motion as we understand it.

Mr. O'Connor: I welcome this opportunity to provide some comment with respect to the motion before the House and to express my real concern about the activities that, as I understand them, were carried on this morning in a committee of this House, wherein a member of this Legislature was served, or someone attempted to serve him, with what was referred to in the motion as a writ but what I think is now more properly known as a statement of claim in a civil action.

We are elected to this Legislature and are sworn to undertake certain duties and responsibilities on behalf of our constituents and on behalf of the people of Ontario, one of which, particularly for those of us who are honoured to serve currently in Her Majesty's loyal opposition, is very definitely to act as guardians of the public purse, as watchdogs of the activities of the government of the day; to bring to public view its activities and its attempted expenditures and to expose them publicly for debate among the people of this province, among our electors.

That is a right, a duty and a responsibility that has been recognized and undertaken by private members of legislatures and parliaments under the British system for literally hundreds of years.

It has been recognized over the centuries that members who are charged with that responsibility ought to be protected and ought to be free from any kind of undue influence, harassment or molestation in the course of carrying out those duties and responsibilities.

To give effect to that common law right which has been established for so long, this Legislature has seen fit to enact the Legislative Assembly Act, section 38 of which reads as follows:

"Except for a contravention of this act, a member of the assembly is not liable to arrest, detention or molestation for any cause or matter whatever of a civil nature during a session of the Legislature or during the 20 days preceding or the 20 days following a session."

1520

The relevant words of that section are "for any cause or matter whatever of a civil nature." Clearly and unequivocally, the issuance and the service or attempted service of a statement of claim fall within the wording of a "cause or matter or whatever of a civil nature." I do not think there is any other way, with the greatest of respect, Mr. Speaker, that you in your deliberations on the point of privilege raised by the member for Brantford can interpret that set of words.

Quite clearly, the persons or law firm that attempted to serve that documentation in the way it did during the sitting of a committee of this Legislature was in violation of section 38, and some steps pursuant to the point of privilege raised by the member ought to be pursued against it.

The writ of summons or the statement of claim itself purports to sue a number of people for libel. It quotes the alleged libel stated for general damages and for punitive damages. In legal actions and in the jurisprudence of this province, punitive damages can be awarded by the court when it is found that the action or activities of the defendants—provided they are found guilty of the libel, if it is also found that the libel was intentional and particularly malicious and that no remorse or regret whatsoever was expressed, then the court has the right to award what are known as punitive damages.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to keep in mind the manner in which this process was attempted to be served on the member for Brantford and the timing of it. As was pointed out, there has been no communication whatsoever between the parties for three or four months. Then in the first hour of the committee meeting in which the issues that are of some interest to the plaintiffs in

this action were to be heard, they took that opportunity in public view in this building and during the sitting of a committee of this House to launch their process.

If anything deserves punitive damages, that kind of activity does. It is flagrant abuse of section 38 of the act, which is a public statute of which they are deemed to have knowledge. If that kind of activity does not draw some kind of punitive action from you in your chair, Mr. Speaker, I do not know what more they could have done to warrant such action on your part. I ask you to investigate the meaning of section 38. As I have indicated, I feel that section has been violated, with intent to influence and subvert the proceedings of the committee. It is clear that was the intent because of the timing of the service of the documentation.

I want to take issue with one thing the honourable House leader for the government said in the course of his remarks with regard to the wording of the report provided upon which we are now debating. He indicated that the section dealing with the appointing or engaging of legal counsel to assist the member for Brantford in defending himself might be considered only with respect to the question of the service or attempted service of documentation on him during the committee. I do not read that portion of the report that way.

I suggest that what was meant by the committee at that time was, should the matter proceed—for instance, should the plaintiffs somehow remedy the difficulty they have under section 38 of the act by properly serving the member for Brantford at some later time, I read that section to mean that this House is being asked to provide legal counsel to the member at the cost of this House for the duration of that action. It reads, "...legal counsel to assist Mr. Gillies in defending himself against legal action arising from this matter." This matter is the alleged libel he is supposed to have uttered that is set out in the statement of claim.

I ask the members of this House to take this matter very seriously—it is one of considerable concern—and that it be returned to the committee to investigate all aspects of it.

Mr. Speaker, your obligation in the very near future is to consider the point of privilege raised by the member this afternoon, keeping in mind the very clear and direct words of section 38 and keeping in mind your rights and powers with regard to people who have breached the Legislative Assembly Act. That includes requiring the perpetrators of this act, if that is so to be found, to

be brought before the bar of this House and dealt with, as has been the case in the past, for the contempt they have shown this Legislature by the actions they carried out this morning.

It is clear that in attempting to intimidate one of the members of this House, those plaintiffs and their counsel have attempted to intimidate all the members of this House who are the persons elected to represent all the people of this province. When one is engaged in a contempt of members of this House, and thus all the people of this province, it is an exceedingly serious matter that ought to be dealt with by Your Honour in a serious way, including the question of bringing contempt proceedings against the perpetrators of that act this morning.

Mr. McClellan: I will be very brief, because I know there are a number of colleagues who want to make some remarks.

I want to support the report of the committee and to add one thing. I have some personal sense of the concern the member is raising. It is ironic he is being sued for remarks that arose out of his criticism of the current convert-to-rent program.

I myself was sued by a member of the executive for criticisms I made of the predecessor of this program, the Ontario rental construction loan program. I was sued for \$3.6 million. The intimidation is a very serious part of the concern. It is not just the matter of privilege and the serving of a civil suit and disruption of the committee proceedings; it is also the intimidation of libel and slander suits arising out of criticisms that members of the assembly make.

I hope it is something the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly will look at, because the intimidation takes the form of very substantial legal costs, in the order of \$15,000 to \$20,000, to defend against these types of suits. The intimidation is not trifling or trivial; it is extremely serious. Most of the members of this assembly would be hard pressed to raise \$15,000 to \$20,000 to defend against a libel or slander suit.

Leaving that aside, there is obviously a clear case that the members' privileges have been violated under section 38 of the Legislative Assembly Act. But more than that, it has been a matter of corridor gossip around the assembly for a number of days that Mr. Fleischmann intended to serve a summons at the meeting of the standing committee on public accounts. It has been a matter of knowledge to a number of members that this idea was being bruited about. On Monday of this week, one of my colleagues said he had heard that Mr. Fleischmann intended to

serve a summons on the member for Brantford at the public accounts committee meeting.

1530

It is clear that not only was this an act of contempt in violation of the Legislative Assembly Act, but it was also a deliberate and premeditated act of contempt on the part of Mr. Fleischmann and his solicitors. It was not something that was done out of carelessness or lack of knowledge. It was done as a deliberate act of contempt against this assembly, that committee and the particular member of the assembly whose rights have been violated. It exceeds in seriousness other matters of privilege that have come to my attention during the time I have served in this House.

I have one final point. It is necessary to stress that, as I understand it, the reference in the report of the public accounts committee does not deal with the legal costs of any civil suit that the member for Brantford may have to incur. It does deal with and is intended to deal with any legal costs he would have to incur in dealing with the violation of privilege brought about by today's incident in the public accounts committee. It is important to make that distinction.

I go back to the first point I made and hope the committee will consider it when it gets the referral. One of the things we have to face up to is that it is now becoming a matter of practice to sue members of the assembly for criticisms they make. Ministers of the crown have taken it upon themselves to sue their critics, and deputy ministers have been known to sue their critics. My colleague the member for Sudbury East (Mr. Martel) will speak a little bit more about that. In these cases, the intimidation amounts to many thousands of dollars in potential legal fees whether or not there are valid grounds for a civil suit. The intimidation comes simply by way of initiating the civil suit, and the legal costs flow from that action.

I hope this report will be unanimously adopted and that the committee will begin to deal with this very difficult matter.

Mr. Epp: I want to speak briefly in support of the reference made by the standing committee on public accounts to this chamber and, in turn, to the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly. As were other members of the committee, I was very surprised this morning when, shortly after 10 o'clock, the member for Brantford raised a point of order, at which time he indicated he had been served with a writ. At that time, he indicated it was for \$1 million, but he subsequently indicated it was for \$2.7 million.

I was totally taken by surprise. I feel it is an affront to the member for Brantford, to all members of the committee and to all members of the Legislature.

The notice could have been served much earlier. I saw the first page of the document, and I think it read January 14, 1987. It could have been served at least seven days ago and maybe as early as eight days ago. I was not aware of the rumour that the member for Bellwoods (Mr. McClellan) was aware of that the member for Brantford was going to be served. Nevertheless, it is my distinct opinion that he could have been served earlier had the person serving the writ wanted to do so.

The matter that has to be raised is that this is a civil suit. The member for Oakville (Mr. O'Connor) read from section 38 of our standing orders. Since this is a civil suit, I do not think we as a committee felt, and I do not think this Legislature feels—there may be members who disagree with me—that the Legislature is responsible for defending individual members when they have civil suits against them. It is only the part whereby his privileges as a member of the Legislature in being served this morning in room 151 have been abridged. That is where I believe some legal support should be extended to him.

Beyond that, I do not think this Legislature or the people of Ontario want in any way to associate themselves with paying legal fees for anyone and everyone who makes statements outside this precinct, for whatever reason that may be. We have to differentiate clearly between those two situations. As the member for Brant-Oxford-Norfolk (Mr. Nixon) indicated earlier, there have been previous occasions when members were served with writs and the Legislature did not pick up those tabs; neither should it on this occasion. We have to make that clear distinction.

As I have indicated, we feel very intimidated. It is a stupid move, to say the least, on behalf of a qualified lawyer of Ontario, and it is one that I am glad the House is going to act upon promptly.

Mr. McFadden: I want to deal with two matters, one a very limited point about the service of process and a second about the more general issues surrounding the action that has been launched by Mr. Fleischmann.

I find it incredible that a major law firm in Canada would be party to what we saw here in this building today. You could understand a process server showing up at a committee meeting of this House on the instruction of a novice lawyer who was perhaps ill informed or inexperienced; but for a major law firm in

Canada, Stikeman, Elliott, with offices not only in Ontario but elsewhere, to be party to this outrage is incredible to me as a lawyer.

The fact is that every lawyer in Ontario is an officer of the court. For its process server to show up at a committee of this Legislature in flagrant violation of the Legislative Assembly Act is to do a disservice, in my view, to the legal profession, and certainly to do no good service to or bring no good reputation on that particular law firm. It is disturbing and shocking that an officer of the court of Ontario, or a law firm of which that lawyer is a partner or with which he is associated, could be any part of this kind of process.

Therefore, at the outset I would place on record, as a lawyer and as an officer of the courts of Ontario, my strong objection to the disrepute and contempt that this kind of action evidenced. I believe the law firm itself and the lawyer involved should provide to this House a public and clear apology for having been any part of this action. I hope as well that the committee will pursue my suggestion, or that you, Mr. Speaker, will pursue it.

It could be argued that the law firm involved was not aware the process server was even going to do what he did, but I would suggest that whoever that process server was, he was an agent of that law firm and was acting on instructions of that law firm, and that law firm was responsible for this outrage. As a consequence, they should appear at least before a committee of this Legislature and perhaps even before the bar of this House to apologize and provide some rational explanation for this outrage.

1540

With regard to the action itself and what it represents, there is no way this Legislative Assembly can condone what is very clearly an attempt at intimidation and there is no way this Legislative Assembly should cower by this kind of legal proceeding. I understand a letter was received by my colleague the member for Brantford from this law firm in relation to this matter some months ago. As a consequence, it is clear the launching of this action was not a spur-of-the-moment thing where a lawyer got together with a client, thought, "Boy, this might be a good idea; let us do it," and then rushed out a writ and got a process server up to the Legislature right away.

This was very clearly a premeditated action on the part of Mr. Fleischmann and his legal counsel. For what objective? It is interesting that the process would have been served on the opening day of hearings on a matter in relation to

Mr. Fleischmann. As a result, it is very clear that the launch of this legal process was not aimed at securing damages or trying to clear up a reputation, because that process could have been served any day of the week, anywhere in Ontario. To reserve it for this morning in a committee meeting of this House is very clear and virtually irrefutable evidence that the launch of this action was meant to intimidate, not just the member for Brantford but, I suggest, other members of that committee in connection with their investigation of this entire matter.

This is not a partisan matter. I would feel this way if this kind of process were served on a member of the Liberal Party or of the New Democratic Party. All of us in this House, as elected representatives of the people, have to be prepared, ready and able to speak out on matters we feel are of public importance and to have matters investigated that we believe are of urgent attention or need investigation to protect the public interest.

We must not allow ourselves to cower or be intimidated or dissuaded by civil actions brought by individuals who, I suggest, are trying to throw the Legislature off its work and to discourage the Legislature from carrying out a very clearly needed investigation on a matter of urgent public interest. The way in which we handle this matter in committee and the way in which you, Mr. Speaker, choose to handle this matter will be important in the long run in terms of the effectiveness of this House in getting on with its business and in investigating matters of urgent public interest and concern.

I therefore urge the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly to get on with its investigation thoroughly. I urge the standing committee on public accounts to carry on with its investigation with effectiveness and force. Mr. Speaker, I urge you, through your offices, to investigate this matter thoroughly and to see that the privileges of this House, and through them the rights of the people of Ontario, are not being infringed upon or limited in any way.

Mr. Martel: Is it safe now, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker: The member for Sudbury East has the floor.

Mr. Martel: On my desk in my office there is a little statue and on the bottom it says something like "sue the dastards." It is not quite that but it is close. I well recall receiving that little statue, because in 1971 I attempted to assist about 26 or 30 families in a little place called Wahnapiatae. I went to bat on their behalf. Ultimately, we had

house repairs made to their homes to the tune of \$500,000.

In the process, however, the sheriff showed up at my home one night—we had broken for the Christmas recess—and the sheriff, whom I knew well, had a paper saying I was going to court, I was being sued. I was frightened. I had four young kids, and you will recall, Mr. Speaker, as you and I came in at roughly the same time, the salary in those days was \$12,000, and I was being sued for a fantastic amount of money.

I could not get any help in those days. I am glad to see some of my colleagues in the Tory party somewhat more helpful today, but they were not very forthcoming then, and we had to take on this outfit. I was frightened; I admit that quite candidly, but if I had backed off, those folks, the 26 or 30 families, would not have seen \$500,000 in repairs to the homes they had purchased.

It is not just today's incident that happened to my friend the member for Brantford that has bothered me. I recall about 15 months ago raising in this House a matter about a company called Allied Heat Treat Ltd. It involved the Minister of Labour. I got to my riding office on Friday morning, and the solicitor for Allied Heat Treat Ltd. was on the phone threatening me with a lawsuit.

Again, you do not back off, but you become somewhat concerned when you have a family, about how, when you are right, you are going to continue to do the job you are here to do, when some legal firm, some legal beagle, gets on the phone and thinks he is going to frighten the hell out of you so that you will not pursue the matters affecting people in your community.

On the final one, the irony of ironies is that I think the member we are talking about was then parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Labour. The Deputy Minister of Labour hired J. J. Robinette and one Mr. Sopinka, because I had blasted the assistant deputy minister of Labour over the Westinghouse matter. Part of it came out last week, it is interesting, in a report that even my friend the member for Brampton (Mr. Callahan) blasted as being totally anti-labour. That case is in there, and we have never got to the bottom of that matter.

Accustomed as I am to eating crow, I was forced to eat crow that day. The feathers still stick here in my craw. I was confronted with the same dilemma as my friend. You can either go out and find \$15,000 or \$20,000 or, as in our case, you can apologize. I must say I was a coward and I took the route of least resistance; I

ate crow. I did not want to. I still figure I should have been vindicated.

What bothers me in these three instances is that when you do your job here and there are problems and risks, people feel they can intimidate you and force you to back off.

I remind members of this summer when we sat on the inquiry on the former Minister of Northern Development and Mines. This has never been resolved to my satisfaction either. We were sitting there one night waiting for the Premier (Mr. Peterson) to show up, and some joker jumped up and ran and served papers on the Premier at a meeting.

I could not believe what I was witnessing that night. First, there was the question of how this joker got in. I am told they actually practised what they were going to do and that some of the media knew about it. To me, that someone could rush up to the Premier in a committee of this Legislature and attempt to serve papers on him was probably one of the most disturbing things I have seen around here. Today's incident is no less serious.

1550

Somewhere along the line, we have to put an end to this nonsense. People think they can rush around and attempt to intimidate members. I am not saying that allows members to carry on willy-nilly and slander people and hurt their reputations, but I have not found that to be the case in many years in this place.

The actions today, I suppose, are because nothing happened to that bird last summer. Maybe if we had dealt with it in a more forceful and forthright manner last August, today's incident might not have occurred. I suspect that someone should have paid the price at that time for the way they charged at the Premier. I found it offensive then. I raised it immediately in committee.

To this day I am not satisfied with the outcome, because I felt it was totally unacceptable that someone should be in this building and could rush up to the Premier, jab papers at him and scream and yell at him, or do the same thing today to the member for Brantford. People have to realize they cannot do that. Unless we put a stop to it now, it is going to happen again.

We have to deal with it in a most forthright manner and put it to rest once and for all. Otherwise, we will continue to face the threat all of us are faced with that we cannot afford: (a) to hire a lawyer; (b) to have it dragged through the courts for two or three years, and that is what I am told it would take; and (c) to be intimidated into

not doing what we are elected to do, which is to come here and do the business of the province.

I am glad it is going to the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly—at least, I hope that is where it is going—so we can make recommendations, which this Legislature can adopt, that will put an end once and for all to those sorts of tactics, practised no less by people who are supposed to be trained in the law. I sometimes wonder whether they have the morals of an alley cat.

Mr. Davis: I too, along with my colleagues, am appalled at the action that occurred this morning in the standing committee on public accounts. One becomes much more deeply affected when one is informed about rumours that have been floating around for the past several days that such action by Mr. Fleischmann was going to occur, that he was going to serve notice on my colleague the member for Brantford.

When one looks at the whole issue, one begins to wonder what is indeed the rationale. It was today that the public accounts committee was discussing the Huang and Danczkay transaction, and if one looks at it, one can only make some assumptions. One has to ask whether this was the most appropriate time for the writ to be served. Were there more hidden messages within that kind of action? Was it simply an act of intimidation directed against the member for Brantford to try to prevent him from asking the questions that he thinks need to be answered in the best interests of the public of Ontario?

It was an attempt to intimidate the whole public accounts committee. It was an attempt to say, in an indirect way by serving that writ for \$2.5 million, "Listen, this can happen to you too." It was an attempt to make us wary of carrying on the type of investigation that members are called upon to carry on as they try to bring out information that needs to be discussed on the floor of this Legislature. It was an attempt to create within us a sense of fear of what happens when we are served with a writ.

I have never been served with a writ, but I can assure members that my colleague, his executive assistant and the two reporters must have felt some tremendous sense of anxiety and helplessness, and were worried about what it means. "What are the implications down the road? If this transaction comes to fruition, what will happen? Where will I find those kinds of resources?" One begins to reflect upon that kind of thinking process, and it is not long before an individual member says: "I am not going to pursue this course of events. I am going to back off. I will

make a public apology or I will just not become involved."

I was most happy this morning to see members from all parties support the resolution that asked you, Mr. Speaker, to investigate the matter and to send off this issue to the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly for investigation and report. I am confident we will also find that kind of support when you make your resolution and send it to the committee; and if it is called for, there will be that kind of support for legal counsel for my colleague the member for Brantford.

I echo the remarks my colleague made this afternoon in the House. There is no individual and no organization big enough in this province, no legal firm, no threat and no act of intimidation that can stop a member of this Legislature from performing his duties properly to ensure that the public interest is protected and that the government enacts good legislation and carries on its practice in accordance with the thrust and honesty expected by the public who elected it.

We must retain our freedom to speak out. That is an issue and a freedom that can never be taken away from members of this Legislature. It is a matter that is imperative to the public of Ontario. I concur with my colleague in the third party who just spoke when he says it is time we put an end to this kind of action. It is not enough just to investigate this matter and make a resolution. We should enact the kind of legislation that is required so that never again can a member of this House stand up and say, as the member for Sudbury East (Mr. Martel) did: "This is how I felt. This is what it means to me." The Legislative Assembly must protect its members.

I have been in this House for about a year and a half, and I do not think the members abuse their rights; they do not deliberately go out of their way to attack individuals, firms or companies so that it affects their ability to carry on business in our society. I do not think that is our intention at all. Our intention is to get to the bottom of issues that have been brought to our attention by our constituents who believe an injustice has occurred. In the sense of duty to which we have been elected, we bring that to the floor for public debate, investigation and resolution.

Such action as occurred this morning in the public accounts committee cannot be condoned by this assembly. We cannot allow it to occur again. The members of the Legislature must vocally repudiate this type of action by both the law firm and the individual who, it seems, deliberately and calculatingly planned this action. I urge you, Mr. Speaker, to move as quickly

as possible to arrive at your decision and to expedite the work of the Legislative Assembly committee so it can bring this to a resolution.

1600

Mrs. Marland: This is a very grave day in the history of the Ontario Legislature. My colleagues who have spoken this afternoon have stated very eloquently what each one of us feels as an elected member of this Legislature.

I see the actions of this firm and of this individual, through his lawyer this morning at the standing committee on public accounts, as an affront to the members of this Legislature. They are an affront not only to the members of this Legislature but also to the whole parliamentary system. It is almost unbelievable to sit here and recognize what it is we are discussing this afternoon on January 22, 1987. It is unbelievable. It is almost as though it were a grade B movie. It is almost as though we are looking at something that is perhaps even quite adequately described as a mafioso tactic.

How impossible it would be for us to fulfil our responsibilities to our constituents and to the residents of the province as a whole if we were to spend all our time looking over our shoulders, shaking in our boots, scanning the telephone calls and the correspondence, wondering when and which one would be the next to threaten us, and in a very real sense, to the degree of issuing a writ.

For me personally, my closest involvement with a similar situation to this was when Hazel McCallion, the mayor of Mississauga, was served with a similar writ. The subtlety of the service of that writ to that woman took place at a Christmas reception, with the same lack of taste, I suggest. When we look at someone of the stature of Mayor Hazel McCallion in Mississauga, anyone in the political arena in Ontario for the past 20 years well recognizes the commitment of that individual to the people she serves.

In her case, it was not a mere \$15,000 to \$20,000 that had to be spent to defend her right to represent the people whom she was elected to serve. Her legal fees to proclaim her innocence in court and finally to confirm her innocence of the charge amounted to in excess of \$40,000. Incidentally, her particular charge was one of conflict of interest. It is perfectly true that those of us who are part of this parliamentary system should never be subjected to being silent because we are at risk of having to invest \$40,000 to prove our innocence.

The tragedy is that once the writ has been issued, once the threat has been made, we are

then thrown headlong with no choice but to defend ourselves. It is the horrible example where even the suggestion that any individual is guilty of any crime or misdemeanour whatsoever is always under doubt, under some shroud of suspicion, unless he is ultimately proven innocent, and in order to be proven innocent, one has to go to the very real and tremendous expense of defence.

Each one of us in the Legislature is elected to exercise a personal, critical judgement. How wonderful it is for those of us who live in the freedom of a country like Canada and, through our hard work and commitment, who are given the honour to work for and to serve the people of this great province. How wonderful it is that as part of that democracy we are also given freedom of speech; and how vile, how shocking and how degrading it is to think that an individual would feel he had the power to make a mockery of that whole system and the power to silence any one member and to deprive the member of the right to freedom of speech within our glorious democracy.

No one of us, as an elected representative in this Legislature, would ever intentionally be slanderous or malicious in any way whatsoever. Why would we want to put at risk our own credibility? Why would we want to use those kinds of tactics and put at risk our ability to do our job and to fulfil our responsibilities?

I have had the privilege of being in this House for only 19 months now, but I say with great pride that in those 19 months I have not heard any member of this Legislature, in any of the three parties that serve as part of the Ontario legislative system, say anything that could be described as malicious or intentionally slanderous.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, in your important role within this House, you have a very grave responsibility to ensure that nothing we say as members to one another can be registered as falling within the category of slandering or discrediting another member. Therefore, it would follow that we would not have anything to gain by trying to discredit or slander someone outside the membership of this Legislature.

As I hear what took place this morning with the issuance of this writ against the member for Brantford, I share a very real empathy with and concern for him as a colleague and a friend. I know every other member of this Legislature shares these feelings and extends to this member the same support and sympathy that I have.

The public accounts committee acted extremely wisely in the motion that was passed, and I

hope the due process of this House will deal with that motion expeditiously and with all due support and cause to which it may address itself.

1610

Mr. Gillies: At the outset, I want to express not only my appreciation to the members who have spoken supportively in the debate this afternoon—and I want to indicate my appreciation for that to all members who have spoken—but also my thanks to members who have made comments or stopped me in the hallways in the past couple of hours or given me notes of encouragement and support. I appreciate it very much, not only for myself but also as a member of the assembly.

I guess some of us are reflecting that what I have been through today and will go through for a while yet, I imagine, can happen to any of us. What we are talking about is not so much an attack on an individual member as an affront to the process and the way we conduct our business in this assembly. I am glad a number of members have raised that in their remarks. It puts some focus on it and perhaps accounts for part of the interest in speaking on this debate. I am not sure my fortunes would necessarily be worth an hour of the Legislature's time if they did not represent something much greater.

I might say parenthetically that when my friend—and I do mean friend—the House leader of the New Democratic Party said in his remarks that the rumour had been going around since Monday that I was going to be served with this writ this morning in the public accounts committee meeting, I wished he had told me that rumour. It has to be the first one in six years that I did not hear, because I went into committee this morning completely oblivious of the fact there was going to be any further action on the letter I had received in the fall. I was taken very much by surprise and was somewhat shocked when the action took place in committee at the time it did.

A number of things bother me about this. I like to think I am not a member who whines when somebody takes a swipe at me. As my friend the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) is often wont to remind me, and I him on occasion, it is a rough business we are in. If one is going to dish it out, occasionally one has to be prepared to take it. I have no problem with that. As we go about our business as members of this assembly, we all recognize that. One has good days and bad days.

But the kind of intimidation that I believe was demonstrated by Mr. Fleischmann's actions, or those of his representatives, this morning I take very seriously because, as I indicated in my point

of privilege earlier today, what happened this morning in committee is not isolated. I ask members to consider it in terms of what became a most unfortunate pattern of intimidation.

Members will recall that I raised the question of the \$3.5-million loan to Huang and Danczkay for its project at 300 Queen's Quay West in late October during the fall session. My friend the Minister of Housing (Mr. Curling) and I had a number of back-and-forth question-and-answer sessions on that substantive question. At the time I raised that matter, I felt it to be a legitimate part of the questioning, and I continue to feel it to be a legitimate issue to question the role of Ivan Fleischmann in terms of the award of that loan.

Members will recall that the public accounts committee sat for many weeks through the summer of 1986 investigating the alleged conflict of interest against the former Chairman of Management Board of Cabinet of Cabinet, who is the member for Oriole (Ms. Caplan), and Mr. Fleischmann's involvement at that time in that matter came very much to light in the committee.

Members will recall the reports coming out of our committee that this gentleman had received a fee of \$30,000, apparently for having lunch with an assistant deputy minister of Industry, Trade and Technology and that this gentleman had made a number of representations to the government at that time. It also came out as part of those committee proceedings that Mr. Fleischmann was also involved, simultaneously with this, in fund-raising activities on behalf of the member for Oriole.

While we could disagree, and we did disagree, in the House and in committee about the propriety of that, I do not speak *ex cathedra*. I am giving my opinion of that activity. Other members have their opinions, but I am sure they will agree that the point is that it was considered at the time to be a legitimate issue. Mr. Fleischmann's involvement in that matter was a legitimate issue that I believed had to be brought to public attention. When we saw the involvement by the same gentleman in the particular convert-to-rent project, I again believed, then and now, that it was a legitimate question to be brought to the attention of the members of the House.

I have reviewed the comments I made at the time with regard to that involvement and I can tell the members of the assembly that there is nothing I said in October and November in raising that issue, nothing I said at that time about this particular gentleman, that I would not stand behind now. Further, I would like the House to

know that anything I say in this assembly I am always prepared to say outside in the hallway. I do not believe that our immunity in terms of what we say in the Legislature and in committee is something we should wrap ourselves in. If I say something in here, I believe I should stand behind it in the public forum.

The timing has been mentioned by a number of members and I believe it to be a serious and troubling question. Mr. Fleischmann's lawyers wrote me a letter at the beginning of November at the very time the opposition parties were indicating they wished this matter of the Huang and Danczkay proposal under convert-to-rent to be investigated by the public accounts committee. I heard not one more word from the law firm of Stikeman, Elliott or from Mr. Fleischmann himself from the day I received that letter until this morning when the writ was served me in the public accounts committee.

It is quite a remarkable coincidence, if it is a coincidence, that at the very time our committee was about to commence the investigation into the matter at hand, the matter in which Mr. Fleischmann's activity was being questioned, was the very morning and the very forum in which the papers were presented to me. I raise that issue as it could be interpreted as a pattern of intimidation and as an attempt to dissuade perhaps just me but perhaps the entire public accounts committee from pursuing a vigorous investigation of this matter.

I also want to say a few words on behalf of the others named in the writ. Obviously, I am very appreciative of the comments made in support of me here in House, but frankly, I am more concerned that the writ—

Mr. Speaker: Order. I am sorry to interrupt the member but we are discussing the committee report that deals with the serving of the writ. I do not know whether the members wish to go into the content of the writ. I suggest we are discussing the manner in which and where it was served.

Mr. Gillies: You are quite right, Mr. Speaker. I will tie back to that and try to be expeditious in doing so. I just wanted to mention to the House my concern that it was not only myself named in the writ served this morning in the public accounts committee, but also my executive assistant, several members of the press gallery and a Toronto newspaper. I see this as being very serious to the assembly. I may have some protection, if the Speaker so rules, under section 38 of the Legislative Assembly Act in terms of being served during a sitting of the House, and

we will eagerly await your judgement on that matter. However, the other people named would not have that protection. On behalf of all of us who have assistants helping us prepare for the work we undertake in the House, I have to express that concern.

I will leave it at that. I ask you, Mr. Speaker, to offer as expediently as you can your ruling on the point of privilege I raised before question period. At the time, I raised it as a matter of privilege, but we now are debating the committee's report arising out of what happened in public accounts. I will be most eager, at the earlier opportunity, to hear your ruling on whether my privileges have been breached and on what basis you will be making that ruling. I am confident in raising the matter earlier, sir, that in fact my privileges were breached, but I await your ruling in that matter.

1620

It is a most unfortunate incident. The only thing I would say is that anyone who would attempt to sue me for \$2.7 million clearly does not know the kind of money we make around here. None the less, it is a matter I take very seriously. I will be retaining legal counsel to advise me in this regard. For all the very supportive words spoken in this debate by members in all three caucuses, I wish to offer once again my sincere thanks.

Mr. Gordon: Let us make no mistake about it: This writ being issued to the member for Brantford is intimidation pure and simple of a member of this Legislature, elected by the people of Ontario to represent them and to speak for them. For one reason or another, many of our citizens today do not feel that they can speak out. They may not feel that they can speak out because of the position they hold, be it in a business, the government or some institution. There are people today who are afraid to speak out because of the general tenor of a group they may belong to. There are all kinds of reasons people do not speak out. People do not speak out sometimes because they are afraid they will lose their job.

The people of Ontario, the people who elect municipal councillors, mayors and members of Parliament look to those members to speak up for them. They look to us to speak up for them in a dedicated, earnest, determined and fearless manner. To say that we never experience any fear when we speak out at times would be false. We are all human and we all have our trepidations. I am sure the member for Brantford, who has been exceptionally diligent in this House, who has tended not only to his constituency but also to the

issues that concern the people of this province, I am sure even he at times has felt that cold hand on his heart, that cold hand that comes when it is suggested that somebody might sue one for standing up for the people of Ontario.

Did he back down? He did not. He diligently came into this House. He got up and asked the questions that needed to be asked, and now he has been served with a writ.

Do members know the first advice he is going to receive when he leaves this Legislature, when he leaves this great room where we have so many members sitting around speaking positively at this time and trying to encourage the member for Brantford to be fearless, to carry on for the people of Ontario? The first thing his lawyer is going to tell him is, "Do not say too much because anything can happen." He has also been told quite clearly by the government House leader—he said it, I listened to him—"Member for Brantford, do not expect us to pick up your legal bills." If that does not send a bit of fear into someone's heart, I do not know what would. If there is one thing that sends fear into anyone's heart, be he a family man or an individual, unmarried person, it is court costs and legal costs.

We say today that the only people who can count on getting true justice through the legal system are either those people who can count on legal aid or the very wealthy. But for the broad middle class today—and it is not myself who is saying this—the legal profession, the Law Society of Upper Canada, has made it clear in some of its pronouncements that it is very worried about justice in this province because the average man cannot afford the costs. What about the member for Brantford? Can he afford the costs?

What is even more alarming is the fact that we have been told that the people who assist a member of the provincial parliament to represent the people of Ontario in a fearless, determined, honest, sincere fashion, to take care of their best interests, have no protection. If this House makes a ruling that does not stand by the member for Brantford at this time, I think many of us are going to lose our assistants.

It might be asked what an MPP needs an assistant for. It so happens we need these people because of the multitude of issues and the multitude of responsibilities we have as members. These people have to feel, if they give us advice or do research for us, they are not going to find they are stuck with a legal bill for \$10,000, \$20,000, \$30,000 or \$40,000; nor should the member for Brantford have to worry about

whether he is going to lose his house or anything else because of the legal bills he is going to incur.

As a former mayor of the city of Sudbury, if it were not for the regional council in the municipality of Sudbury, I too would have been stuck with legal bills. I too was sued by a developer and had to hire a lawyer and go through an examination for discovery. If anyone thinks an examination for discovery is a joke, you get in a little room with two lawyers—one being yours and one being the lawyer of the person who is suing you—or they may have two or three on the other side of the table. They start going through every word you have said trying to get you to say things you did not say. Anyone who thinks that is a happy circumstance has another think coming.

This foul writ that was served on the member for Brantford today sends a stench through this House that we can well do without. I say to the legal firm that took that action, “You are trying to undermine the very democracy, the very people who have been elected, who have been given a certain power by the people of Ontario to serve them and to serve them well.” The fact that we have some power here is only because of the fact that people elect us democratically. When they give us that power, they expect us to exercise it in a judicious fashion.

There are some people who might say, “If you people have that power and you do not have to worry about being sued, you are going to become completely irresponsible. However, there are many checks and balances in this House and many checks and balances outside this House.

First, there is the balance of our fellow members sitting in this House here today. We all want to be seen to be people of good reputation by our fellow members; we want each other’s respect. No man or woman wants to be looked down upon by the colleagues with whom they work in committee and in this House year in and year out.

Second, there is the press. The press will take care of those members who abuse their powers and rights as given by the electorate of this province. They will see to that.

Third, our own constituents are fair-minded people. They do not want a member who will drag them down or who will represent them in a manner that brings disgrace on the riding or the community that member represents. I say to the House today that what happened to the member for Brantford, this odious writ that was served, is a writ not only against him but also against the people who serve in this House.

1630

If we cannot serve our people in a fearless manner, then who will speak for them? Who will speak for the dispossessed and the downtrodden? Who will speak for those who fear to bring up an issue but who would go to their member? We must not allow this writ to strike the kind of fear that lays a cold hand on the heart of the member for Brantford. That is what it is.

After today’s debate and after the ruling that will come from the Speaker in this chamber, I hope that member will leave with the confidence and the spring in his step that will say he knows that he can continue to speak out for his riding and the people of Ontario and that he can continue to speak out from his heart using the prudence he has shown today.

Mr. Speaker: Do any other members wish to participate in the debate? If not, I should inform the members that instead of just putting the question, “Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?” I hope all members appreciate what they are voting on.

When a committee report comes to the House, it is the usual procedure that the chairman of the committee makes a brief statement and then a motion for the adjournment of the debate takes place. At the appropriate time today, when that report was presented by the chairman, I actually placed that motion, and at that time the government House leader asked for unanimous consent to proceed to deal with the report. That unanimous consent was given.

There has been considerable discussion on the report. I listened very carefully to the comments and noted that many members expected a response from the Speaker on this matter. I have to inform the members that the member for Brantford raised a point of privilege earlier in the day, and at that time the usual procedure was not followed. As I recall the proceedings, the member informed the House that the committee would come before the House with a committee report.

If a point of privilege is raised at any time, it is up to the Speaker to decide, if requested, whether it is a *prima facie* case of privilege. If so, any member at that time has the right to place a motion to a committee to make a decision as a recommendation to the House. It is not up to the Speaker to make the decision.

As I understand it, the report that you are going to vote on now does make that decision. I hope you are all aware of the content of the motion. It is what was in the report given by the chairman of

the public accounts committee. If that is clearly understood, I will now put the question.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Gillies: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: This morning, when the motion was put before the public accounts committee, it was broken into two parts. I abstained from the vote on the latter with regard to legal counsel because I believed that it could be construed as a matter that would benefit me. With that in mind, I wonder whether the record could show that similarly here in the chamber, I did not voice a vote in favour of the motion because I believe that could be construed as a conflict.

Mr. Speaker: I think that is in order. It is certainly on the record now.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Mr. Breagh from the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly reported the following resolution:

That supply in the following supplementary amount and to defray the expenses of the office of the chief election officer be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1987:

Office of the chief election officer program, \$22,900.

RECORD OF DEBATES

Mr. Breagh: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: A document has been distributed in the chamber this afternoon, and I will send you a copy of it. It appears to be a Hansard Official Report of Debates, and in reading through it, I have some reason to believe it is not that document at all, but rather excerpts or an edited version of it.

I am going to send you a copy of this and ask you to take this matter under consideration. I am not quite sure what the violation would be, but I do believe we treasure somewhat the official transcript of the proceedings here and I am not sure we are prepared to be quite so free with letting—I am not sure whether it is a copyright or what it might be.

However, there is this document, which has been circulated in the House this afternoon and may well have been used outside, which purports to be an Official Report of Debates. It is, in my view at least, not that. I ask you to take that matter under consideration. I do not think we

need a ruling on it today, but there is a point that should be recognized there.

Mr. Wildman: Mr. Speaker, with regard to the point of order raised by my colleague, it appears, to me at least, that the problem is related to the cover of this document and the way it is bound, which makes it look as if it is a full and complete issue of Hansard. In many cases members may circulate portions of Hansard, but in most cases those are Xerox copies and it is obvious, or it should be made obvious by the member, that it is an edited version or portions of Hansard. In this case, it is done in such a way that it makes it look as if it is a full copy when, in fact, it is not.

Mr. Speaker: I will certainly take a look at it, as I have already. I thank the member for a copy. We are very slow in printing, are we not? This is dated November 15, 1984.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

House in committee of supply.

ESTIMATES, MINISTRY OF HOUSING (continued)

On vote 1904, community housing program; item 1, program administration:

Mr. Chairman: When we adjourned the other day, we were in the midst of vote 1904. I believe questions and comments were taking place. Who would like to lead off on that?

Mr. Gordon: The last time we met we were talking about community housing. A number of our members would have been here earlier, but with the debate that has just taken place, they had matters they had to take care of in their constituencies and they asked me to ask the minister whether he would agree to have the final vote on community housing on Monday. This would allow them to discuss a few points with the minister on that matter, the idea being that we would finish our estimates on Monday.

Hon. Mr. Curling: I had hoped the honourable members who had indicated a great interest in this would be here. It is unfortunate, knowing full well that it could have been debated or that questions could have been asked, that they are not here. Being the kind of free individual I am and being so accommodating, I will agree very hesitantly, but I will agree, that we end our estimates on Monday.

1640

Mr. Gordon: I thank the minister. I think that is very admirable. We will see that these

members are here on Monday to discuss with the minister the matters about which they are concerned. The member for Mississauga South (Mrs. Marland) wishes to raise a number of points at this time.

Hon. Mr. Curling: To be optimistic, if we exhaust vote 1904 with the members here, we might move to vote 1905. Those members who want to ask questions and give comments can do so on Monday.

Mr. Chairman: Do you, therefore, wish to stand down when you are through with your questions today on vote 1904? Do you wish to defer the vote on that and go to vote 1905 and carry both votes at the end?

Mr. Gordon: I think that is exactly what the minister has just suggested. It is a good compromise.

Mrs. Marland: I do not have vote 1904 in front of me. My questions on behalf of the constituents I represent in Mississauga South are on three different areas. Perhaps they do come within vote 1904. I know the minister is aware of the problems of available housing for many sectors of the community within my constituency. In the past, he has expressed that there has been an ongoing problem in the provision of housing for many sectors of the community for a long time. In some of his responses, he has suggested that the problem predates his domain in this ministry.

I want to ask the minister what, after 18 months, he feels I can give as answers to those people in Mississauga South who today have an even greater need for housing than existed 18 months ago. In particular, I am concerned about young couples who, because of the lack of availability of rental housing, are not able to seek that as an alternative to coming together with the purchase of their first home.

Can the minister tell me what he feels his ministry has done to help these young people who are trying to achieve the purchase of their first house or to be able to access affordable rental housing?

Hon. Mr. Curling: It is very unfortunate that the honourable member was not here at the inception. I thought I had articulated, and some of her colleagues even said how eloquently we had expressed, our assured housing policy and the program we had done. She mentioned that some of the problems, some of the issues addressing housing, predate or are outside of my mandate. I do not hesitate at all in chasing and finding the cause of the problem, the cause of this

lack of affordable rental housing, regardless of whether it lies within the ministries of Health, Community and Social Services or wherever. That is what I understood the first part of her question to be.

We can sit around and talk about blame all the time and not do anything. Having said that, I am sure the member is quite familiar with our assured housing policy and the very aggressive way in which I and my staff went about putting together a housing policy and an ambitious program of 6,700 social housing units in the next five years and an ambitious budget of half a billion dollars to do that. We are proud of that program and of 18 months of accomplishment in that respect.

The member asked what we are doing about new home buyers who cannot afford \$250,000 homes as starter homes. That is the kind of price being paid for three- and four-bedroom homes, and they cannot afford that. What are we doing about the low-income people who want ownership? I thought I heard that question from the member. If not, I will still address it, so she will not ask it the next time she gets up.

The activity in that ownership market has been very great. When we spoke to builders, they said we should not stimulate that market any more because they are quite busy building at that level. That does not address those who want to own homes in the region of \$50,000 to \$60,000; however, we feel we should be very aggressive in bringing affordable rental units on the market.

In my opening remarks I explained in detail what we have done. I could send the member the Hansard containing those comments. It might answer any questions that may provoke her into getting up again.

Mrs. Marland: The minister was addressing his comments to rental supply units, and my question was geared to the first purchase of a home by a young couple. With respect to the minister, I would not be addressing the question to a \$250,000 home but rather to a home valued at an amount accessible to a young couple within an available mortgage payment.

Although the minister has addressed his program of 6,700 social housing units in the next five years, I want to know how that has changed anything in the past 18 months and how he can tell the people who have the concern I have just expressed what has happened that is different from what existed 18 months ago for young couples in Mississauga South who at this time can never see themselves accessing or having the pleasure of ownership of their first home.

Hon. Mr. Curling: Just so the member does not misunderstand what I am saying, I attempted to address the question of starter homes. I used the term "starter homes," to mean ownership units. In one of our programs, the ministry is offering unconditional grants of about \$2,500 for each unit produced and sold. We are asking the municipalities to get involved in this and to assist us to get those starter homes, demonstration projects, in place.

Right now, I cannot assess how successful that has been during the past 18 months. I am giving the municipalities their opportunity to respond. They are quite busy giving out building permits in other areas, and I gather they are backed up with building permits. We hoped they could respond to our starter homes, so people who cannot afford very expensive homes—when I used the figure \$250,000 for a home, I was saying that the people the member was speaking about were not able to afford that. We are speaking about someone who would like to buy a home for \$80,000 or \$90,000 and would not require an extravagant amount for a mortgage, so we had a demonstration program on starter homes.

1650

The member asked what we had seen in 18 months. In 1985, the number of social-housing rental units placed on the market, prior to my coming in, was little more than 6,000. As of today, I have committed 16,000 units. If the member looks at that 18 months, those 16,000 units are a tremendous increase over and above the 6,000. These things take time. When questions are asked in the House, the critic many times asks me, "Where are they?" He has not seen skyscrapers going up. We do not build instant houses. We do not pour water on them and they come up immediately overnight. It takes time. It takes about 18 months or so for the erection of such buildings.

The member, who was an elected municipal politician at one stage of her career, knows the process to get a program in place, to get federal funding and to make the arrangements and changes that go on. We got a tremendous amount of co-operation from the federal government in the initial stage, and then, sad to say, it dragged its feet a little and slowed down the process. We were ready and geared up, mainly because of our very efficient staff. When we cranked up the system, they were ready to go. The problem was that the response by the federal government did not come in. Perhaps it did not anticipate our

coming in so fast and its having to respond so quickly.

Previously, we in the province looked only at delivering the municipal nonprofit units. The federal government's offer was that we should deliver the private nonprofit and co-op units. The federal government offered its staff to assist us, realizing that acquiring responsibility for the private nonprofit and co-op units was a great increase in producing social housing over and above what we were used to. We were all geared up with a staff that was excited to proceed in that way.

With that in place, we committed 16,000 units. Comparatively speaking, during the past 18 months, that is quite an achievement since one has to go through all those processes. I did not detail dealing with the process, but 16,000 units are quite an achievement for 18 months.

Mrs. Marland: It is unfortunate that the minister is answering my question about the first-home buyer with figures for rental units. When he talks about 16,000 units being committed, I am sure he is talking about rental units. What is the ministry doing to assist the first-home buyer? He mentioned that he has \$2,500, which is for a starter-home demonstration project dependent on the municipalities.

I am a representative of the municipality that has the fastest rate of growth not only in Ontario but also in Canada. We had \$1 billion worth of building permits issued in Mississauga in 1986, an incredible record. My municipality is growing. We are processing the building permits. There are no problems with that in Mississauga but there is a problem with the need to help the first-home buyer. That was the thrust of my question on behalf of many, not necessarily just young couples; young couples certainly, but also people who may have lived for a long time in rental housing, rental apartments or rental homes and who wish to achieve the joy and the very major step in their lives of owning their first home. I did not hear that in the answer the minister has given.

Perhaps it would be easier for the minister if I were to go to another subject. We have talked about the need for the supply of rental units to be increased. He has thrown out some figures but I do not know his precise answer on the provision of rent-geared-to-income accommodation for a sector of our community, not only in Mississauga South but throughout Ontario as well. The need is very real.

When the minister became the Minister of Housing he was very critical of the lack of

provision of housing in all these areas. Now I hear him say, "You cannot do things overnight." I think he used a rather eloquent description. He said: "It is not like planting seeds and watering them. They do not pop up overnight." Indeed, they do not, but I would like to say that a tremendous number of homes have been built in Mississauga in the past 18 months. I do not know the provision the Liberal government has made in that time to make ownership accessible to the people who need that kind of accommodation.

Another area about which I have a very real concern, and which I mentioned previously, is the need for shelters for battered women and children, abused women and children, young families who live with a very real threat of violence on a minute-by-minute, hour-by-hour basis in their existing homes. These families, again not necessarily young people, need to have shelters to escape to.

In the past few months an additional shelter has been approved for the regional municipality of Peel, but I would like to emphasize that the region of Peel has a population of very close to 600,000 people. With a population of 600,000 people we have one shelter for abused families. That shelter is Interim Place in Mississauga South. The region of Peel stretches all the way up through the north part of the city of Mississauga, through the city of Brampton and through the town of Caledon. We are talking about 500 square miles in the region of Peel. We are talking about one shelter and now, I hope, about a second one.

The existing shelter has only 18 beds. The problem with Interim Place is that those 18 beds are taken by abused young families who have had to escape the threat, indeed the reality, of violence in their homes, but they in turn are not able to exit from Interim Place because there are no affordable rental units for them to move into. Instead of staying there for a short time, they end up staying far too long. Other families that need to escape to a shelter such as Interim Place do not have the opportunity to get in because the people who are in cannot get out.

Another ministry has allotted funds for counselling these victims of violence within the domestic family arena. Although I recognize the need for counselling in these families, the immediate need is not for counselling; it is for the provision of shelter. What is the minister's immediate commitment to the provision of those shelters, not only in the region of Peel but in the province as a whole? What does he see as a priority, and what, in actual dollars, has he been

willing to allocate for the provision of those shelters?

Hon. Mr. Curling: The member raises a very good point. She will be aware that battered women were not taken into Ontario Housing Corp. projects before and were not assessed by the point system until recently, when I changed the policy to accommodate them. The member rightly stated that women in emergency shelters have to stay longer because there is no place to go. The change in our policy at the Ontario Housing Corp., to accept battered women, has another psychological support and I will explain that.

Women are placed in an awful situation, knowing that the men who were beating them know they have no other place to go. Having no other place to go, they have actually been trapped within that environment. Even just the declaration that we will accept battered women in our projects will make think a second time, knowing there is an alternative and a recourse for women and their children.

As the member rightly raised, we were looking at the emergency shelters or facilities that were offered and women were staying much longer than expected because they could not find alternative accommodation. Having taken that first step to accommodate them in Ontario Housing projects, for the 3,000 units announced for hard-to-house individuals in the province, we are looking at any private nonprofit, co-op or even municipal nonprofit projects that would like to come forward to build those projects for battered women. I have not yet committed or approved any of those 3,000 units, but it is near. Within a couple of weeks or a month, I think some approvals will be made and consideration given to battered women.

Mr. Philip: The matter that was raised is welcome. It is something we have been fighting for for a long time, but the problem with the definition is that battering is considered only as physical. This is something on which I have had an extensive conversation with David Greenspan. There is something equally cruel that may not have the physical marks and that may not have the doctors at Etobicoke General Hospital taking pictures and showing bruises. There is such a thing as psychological battering that can be equally cruel. This is a factor that should be considered, particularly when it comes to the transfer of a wife and her children to OHC units when it is fairly clear to social workers, clergymen and other responsible people in the community that the marriage has broken down

and the person is suffering such mental cruelty from the spouse that she may end up in need of psychiatric treatment at some point. There are cases of people having been driven to the point of suicide through psychological battering by a spouse.

Will the minister look at that definition of battering? Just as he requires some documentation on physical battering, it is possible to obtain documentation on psychological battering, which can be as abusive and can result in death in the same way as physical battering can.

Hon. Mr. Curling: The point the member raises is very important. I do not think the policy we have in place is a perfect policy, but it is a start in the right direction. It was a long time in coming. This should have been in place for a long time.

I do not want to say whether physical or psychological battering is worse. Both are very severe to the individual. The member is right that we have to look at it and see how we will assess those situations. The member also knows that it will be quite a difficult task. However, it is a human condition and as legislators, we cannot shun it. As a minister, I cannot shun it. It is a real thing and we will address it. I will take up this matter with the chairman to see that we institute that situation and that people are not left out because they are psychologically battered.

Mrs. Marland: The minister has not yet answered my questions, particularly the last one. I will go over it again for him and try to make it a little clearer.

He said he was addressing the problem I identified of the shortage of space in shelters for victims of family violence by making those women and children eligible for Ontario Housing units by opening up access. I think that was his answer. That might be a solution if it did not just result in adding to the lists and lists of names. It is only a function. It adds to the already pre-existing, tremendously long list. I respectfully suggest it is not a solution in the short term. I do not even know what he would consider as a solution in the long term.

The minister talked earlier about the number of units he has planned during the next five years. I suggest that, tragically, many of these families may not survive a five-year wait to escape situations they are in on a daily basis. My question to the minister was, what is the immediate commitment in 1987 to the region of Peel in terms of an additional shelter or additional shelters for families that are in a situation of domestic violence today?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I will try this again for the member. She asked two basic questions. She asked about supply. There is an inadequate supply. Just saying that we will accommodate—there are long waiting lists of those who need affordable housing. The other question was about who qualifies. Just saying they are qualified to go into these projects has not done anything. It has not solved the problem.

I do not need to go into battering through neglect; that is a different battering. The previous government created a terrible situation with this backlog. We have had 18 months. The member asks me, "Have we solved this problem in 18 months?" I say: "No, we have not solved the problem. This has taken years of abuse, neglect or whatever term she wants to use of the supply of affordable rental units."

1710

The previous government also neglected to look at the situation of battered women for years, so they were subjected to that for years. I do not want to get into this type of debate. All I want to say to the member is that we have done a tremendous amount. We have increased the supply tremendously for those who cannot afford rental accommodation.

We also went further in looking at a situation where they did not qualify to enter a project under the previous government to enter into a project and made the qualification. We went still further; we directed a special 3,000 units to the hard-to-house, including battered women.

The member asks, what am I doing; what have we done? These are not gestures, these are hard action—not promises, not political promises or anything, but action addressing a horrible neglect in the past.

Mrs. Marland: I did not ask the minister whether he has solved the problem; I asked him what he was doing. I recognize, as does every member of this Legislature, that any problem in any subject area for which we are responsible can never be solved overnight, because problems are always ongoing. I am simply asking him, apart from the paper technicality he just described—these women and children, who at one time were not eligible for these other units, are eligible now that he has opened up the lists; that is marvellous—what has that done for these individuals?

He said he has allocated 3,000 units for the hard-to-house. I would like to ask him where. I have now asked three times what precisely has been done in the region of Peel. The people in the region of Peel, particularly the people in Mississauga South and particularly the people

responsible for the young families housed today in Interim Place in Mississauga South, are saying, "When are we ever going to have some kind of solution to our problem today?"

The minister mentions that he inherited a problem. I suggest that is a very unfair comment. He inherited a situation. When we take back the Ministry of Housing from him, we will also inherit something. There are always ongoing lists, and I recognize that. There is always an inheritance from one ministry to another. However, it is time the minister recognized he cannot keep saying, "Well, it was 42 years of nothing." It was not 42 years of nothing. There are many housing programs for which the Progressive Conservative Party was responsible. The Progressive Conservative Party was responsible for the establishment of Interim Place.

I am simply asking what the minister has done in 18 months to improve the situation. I even helped him by saying I understand there has been approval for an additional shelter in Mississauga, I think; it is certainly in the region of Peel. I have asked him to confirm that funds have been approved for an additional shelter and what other funds he is allocating to resolve the problem in 1987.

At this point, let us deal with the one area, that of the families as victims of domestic violence. Please do not answer that the lists have been opened up, that they are now eligible for other rental units. It is no help to them to be in the paper chase unless those units are a reality. If there are 3,000 units for the hard-to-house, will the minister please tell me where they are and particularly where they are in the region of Peel?

Hon. Mr. Curling: The member wants specific figures on what we have done for Peel. There is an application for a project within Peel for battered women. I do not think anything has been approved yet in that specific case.

I have before me some figures I was looking at. In 1985—again, the member asks, "What have we done?" Please be patient and do not get too annoyed. Once the member asks what I have done, it becomes a comparison: What was done before? What have I done now? Are we moving towards a solution? The member provoked me to tell her about their neglect. I am more into solving the problem than finding who was the cause.

In 1985 there were 161 nonprofit allocations. In 1986 I approved 381 in Peel, which the member asked about specifically. In 1987 there will be 247. We have more than doubled the units in 1986 and we are still moving to address the

need in Peel. While I am the Minister of Housing, I shall address the need in Peel.

The member asked what we have done in 18 months. I have gone over it a couple of times. The member may not be impressed, but I think the people will be tremendously impressed when they see all these units being built. As I said, there are no instant homes.

The member said earlier I keep avoiding the new home buyers, but she must understand that right now it is the more expensive homes that builders are actively building. We cannot seem to interest the municipalities or the builders in that other area. We are in a unique situation now in the building industry. It may be somewhat unfair to those whom we would like to see building at the lower end but who are not so interested in building there. I am quite prepared to look at any time at any project or proposal that will be able to excite them to build at that level.

I want to make one other point. The solutions we have in place did not come from within the ministry. My staff and I went out and requested the communities to advise us on how to solve their problems. We responded accordingly. Peel has been quite active, as the member knows. It is an area that has been active in social housing, and we will continue to consult the community. The solution does not come from within the ministry; we do not impose solutions. We make sure that a community is involved in regard to its problems.

Mrs. Marland: The Minister of Housing says he does not impose solutions. That is a very interesting statement, which I do not exactly know how to interpret. If he says he does not impose solutions, I hope he will at least encourage solutions and perhaps even use his ministry and its resources to provide solutions. That is all I am asking for. Surely when the minister talks about the kind of housing that is being built within a municipality, he is not really suggesting that municipalities should decide what is built.

Let us talk about the number of units that he mentioned have been allocated in Peel, and let us talk about his statement about Peel having some experience—I do not know what his words were; certainly something like "having experience" or "having knowledge" of nonprofit units. There is no question about which nonprofit housing corporation anywhere in this province has the greatest expertise and has been the leader in the development of nonprofit housing units. It is the Peel Non-Profit Housing Corp., of whose board I was a member when I was a regional councillor.

When the minister lists the number of units that were allocated last year and are being allocated this year, he should know that there pre-existed in excess of 2,000 units in the region of Peel. Fortunately, a very active nonprofit housing program has been thriving under the expert guidance of the commissioner of housing in the region, Peter Smith, whose personal expertise was the great stimulus and thrust for the development for which Peel Nonprofit Housing Corp. was ultimately responsible. Peter Smith's leadership in his position as commissioner of housing for the region of Peel was what convinced the regional councillors who sat on that corporation that there was a solution, a possibility of providing housing units through a nonprofit housing program for housing that otherwise was not available for seniors and families.

1720

When the minister talked about the number of units in Peel, which he just threw back in response to my question, he did not bother to describe how many were seniors' units and how many were family units. The thrust of my questioning has been my concern for families. In particular, I want to come back to families that are victims of domestic violence. I am even more concerned now than I was half an hour ago when I started to ask some questions.

I am very disappointed to hear the minister say that nothing has been approved for Peel in terms of a shelter for battered families. He said he thought something was under consideration, but that nothing had been approved. Perhaps the minister can give me the reason. If it is that he has not had a formal application, I suggest it would be far easier for the people responsible for this in the region of Peel if they had the assurance that there was funding for an additional shelter.

I recognize that recently, with the help of the federal government, we have had an additional facility for seniors' nonprofit housing units, which are finally being built in the area of Malton. However, the focus of my questioning this afternoon has been families. It is to those young families that I wish the minister to address his answers.

Will the minister tell me, of these 3,000 units for the hard-to-house, as he described them, whether any are in Peel, and if so, where? Will the minister tell me whether in his opinion one additional shelter will be funded for battered families? If he had an application for two, would he agree that a total of three shelters for a population of more than 600,000 people in 500

square miles is a reasonable goal for accommodation for these families. I ask him that, recognizing that there is one shelter in Burlington and one in Etobicoke, which I believe is Habitat. They are small in accommodations; there are something like 12 to 18 beds per shelter. I would like to know the answers to these questions.

Hon. Mr. Curling: When I used the words "imposing solutions," I meant we do not go in with a preconceived idea as to how to solve the problem but ask the community how we can best go about solving its problems. Imposing solutions means they come from within the ministry rather than consulting with the community to find a solution to the various problems. I wanted to clear up that point.

The member talked about municipal nonprofit. The figures I quoted were for municipal nonprofit in Peel region. In addition to that, in 1986 we had another 258-unit facility for family housing under private nonprofit. All but 70 of the units I have named are family units. We are addressing the need raised by the member.

The other question the member raised was whether any of the 3,000 units were targeted for or would be responding to Peel. I gather there are no applications before us now on behalf of battered women. If they are before us, none of those 3,000 units has been approved yet; so I hope they will give consideration to bringing in applications. I hope they will do so. The 3,000 units are to house hard-to-house people.

I am also working very closely with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and each mayor. I spoke to the mayor there in regard to how best we can use some of those units in addressing some of our concerns. We have a day-to-day consultation going on, if that is needed, to address that problem.

Again, I emphasize that no applications have been received from the Peel region in regard to battered women. I gather now one may have been received. Nothing has been approved yet across the province. I am sure that will be considered when the time comes to approve those.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Polsinelli): The member for Etobicoke (Mr. Philip) would like to participate in this debate. I leave it to you whether you would like to continue or give him an opportunity to participate in the debate.

Mrs. Marland: I need to continue only until I get the answer to the first question I asked this afternoon, and that will probably be up to the minister. I do not plan to exclude the member for Etobicoke. I allowed him a supplementary

earlier. I recognize he has some of the same concerns I do.

I just heard the minister say they had not received an application for a shelter for battered families. Then he said, "I think perhaps there is one." I do not know what the answer is, whether there is an application or not. I do not know how the reference to AMO and talking to the mayor was meant.

Hon. Mr. Curling: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman: The member is asking me some specific questions. She said she does not know where she is at. I told her that there may be one and that I had not approved any yet.

The Acting Chairman: Order. The member's failure to understand the response, or the minister's failure perhaps to understand the question, is not a point of order. The member for Mississauga South will please continue.

Mrs. Marland: I shall certainly look forward to the written Hansard, and then perhaps we will understand the answer the minister is attempting to give. He seemed to suggest there had been no application from Peel for the 3,000 hard-to-house units. Then he seemed to suggest the solution for the families of domestic violence shelter came out of those 3,000 hard-to-house units. Is he saying the battered wives and children who need the interim shelters—I am not talking about permanent accommodation for these families; I am talking about interval housing. That is why in Mississauga the house is called Interim Place; it is temporary, emergency shelter. I suggest that if the minister understands his own program, the 3,000 hard-to-house units he is talking about are indeed permanent rental housing.

My question has been very simple. What is the provision within the ministry for emergency shelter needs, particularly in the region of Peel? Does the minister agree that one or two shelters with an upward limit of perhaps 18 beds is sufficient to address the emergency of that crisis problem?

1730

Hon. Mr. Curling: If so many beds will address those needs in that specific area, each application will be assessed. I tried to express to the member that when we have a project in place, there is a process. The basic process is that they must apply for that program. If there is no application, we cannot assess it. If there is an application, we will assess it.

The 3,000 units have not yet been assessed. I do not know whether Peel has one, two or three;

it does not come to me at that stage. The 3,000 units are for those who are hard to house. We are asking all regions, if they have a program such that they can target and if they have a program that will fit within the 3,000, to please apply.

I said we have been very proactive. I have been speaking to the mayors, and the member asks what that has done. I spoke to the mayors personally to say, "I encourage you to participate in that project of 3,000 units."

Again, if there are three before us, we will assess them all, and when they come before me, the approval will be given if they meet the criteria.

I want to make another point there. I would like to impress upon the member that of the 6,700 units I speak of quite often, 10 per cent are for special needs or special purposes, and within that, the applications of battered women are accommodated.

Mrs. Marland: I will put my final question as simply and as directly as I can and see whether I can end up with an answer. The minister again answers my question on emergency shelter for battered families with a reference to the 3,000 units for the hard-to-house. I understand perfectly well that the 3,000 units for the hard-to-house are permanent rental housing; they are units for families to move into and rent permanently.

My question is about emergency shelter, which at the utmost would be a two-week to three-week interim placement; emergency shelter placement. Will the minister tell me whether his ministry has allocated any funds for either one or two interim emergency shelters for battered families in the region of Peel?

Hon. Mr. Curling: We do have a project that accommodates battered women, but the member talks about emergency shelters, and the Ministry of Community and Social Services funds and administers emergency shelters. In the situation of battered women, the Ministry of Housing project, the 3,000 units, will accommodate battered women. I do not know whether I can make it much plainer.

Mr. Philip: The member is clearly asking, are there any, not in Etobicoke North, but in the Peel area? Does the minister have any west of Etobicoke to which people in that region can go? It is a fairly clear question, and the answer should be yes; if it is yes, where are they? Or what are his plans for them? The member has asked the question two or three times. I cannot see why it is so hard for the minister to answer it.

Hon. Mr. Curling: We need an interpreter here. If the member is asking whether there is any

emergency shelter for battered women in Peel, I can get back to her and tell her the addresses if there are any there. If she is asking again whether there are any applications, I can get back to her and say, "Yes, there are applications." If she is asking whether any have been approved, I am saying I have not yet approved any of those projects for battered women in the 3,000 units. I hope I have addressed that question.

Mrs. Marland: The Minister of Housing does not have to tell me where in the region of Peel the shelters are or how many there are today, January 22, 1987; I know. Three quarters of an hour ago I told him we had one. My question has been, when can we expect the second and third, since we have one with 18 beds for a population of 600,000? His reference to the provision of emergency housing by the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney) amounts to dollars, because these people have to be housed in hotels and motels, anywhere they can find somewhere for these families to escape to, because Interim Place with its 18 beds is constantly full and has a waiting list.

My questions have been very simple. I will yield the floor to the member for Etobicoke because I am experiencing such a high level of frustration in trying to obtain a very simple answer to a very simple question. I do not need the addresses of where they are in Peel. Furthermore, the addresses of where these homes are located is highly confidential for obvious reasons.

However, I suggest that the solution of the Minister of Community and Social Services of providing interim shelter in a hotel or motel for families who are trying to escape family violence is hardly the kind of alternative we should be looking at. Years ago, that was the solution. Years ago, people with tremendously regressive thinking thought it was okay to pop these families into a motel or hotel room as an escape from where they were. Fortunately, under the Progressive Conservative government of Ontario, we progressed to recognizing the very real need to give these families, even on an interim shelter basis of two or three weeks, something a little better than a motel room.

I want the minister to recognize from the thrust of my questions this afternoon that I look forward very eagerly to a reply from him about where in his plans for 1987 he has provision for a solution for housing for victims of domestic violence within families, both in an interim shelter or emergency shelter setting and through an exit

from that interim shelter into a rent-geared-to-income unit.

Hon. Mr. Curling: I want to impress on the member that when her colleague in the third party tried to explain the question to me, I was trying to answer his question, his interpretation. With my having done that, the member is saying that I did not answer her question.

Maybe the difficulty is with the English language and not with me at all. I feel the member will better understand the written word when she sees it in Hansard, as she said, where I stated and will state again that in 1987, this International Year of Shelter for the Homeless, we have 3,000 units. The reason those 3,000 units came about was strong lobbying by members around the province, saying we needed more for the hard-to-house, especially battered women.

What are we doing for 1987? Those 3,000 are there for those regions and areas. Those individuals facing domestic violence can apply. We look forward to those applications. I do not look forward in the sense that I am happy these things are happening—it is sad in a society such as this that women have to be subjected to that—but I am happy to know there is a ministry that can respond to situations such we are having now.

The honourable member articulated her concerns very well. I am sure her constituents are mighty proud that she brought them forth to the minister and that he will address them accordingly. As I said, she is welcome to the 3,000 units. She can come personally to the ministry, put the applications on my desk, say, "Here they are," and my willing staff will run with energy and enthusiasm, as they have done in the past 18 months, to make sure we address those needs if they meet those criteria.

1740

Mr. Philip: Why do I always feel that when this minister answers a question I am getting a poor imitation of Jascha Heifetz?

Interjection.

Mr. Philip: They are very long anyway. He reminds me a little of the old videotapes of Mackenzie King. One was never sure when his answer started or when it began or what happened in between or indeed what would happen when and if he ever finished.

The question I would like to ask the minister is fairly simple. One of the major problems that exists—

Mr. Haggerty: He was around for a long time, was he not?

Mr. Philip: I am sorry; if the member would like to ask a question he is free to do so.

Mr. Offer: We would like to hear you ask one.

Mr. Philip: It is very hard to ask one when the member is so rudely interrupting.

Mr. Offer: Oh, please.

Mr. Philip: I am sorry; I happen to be interested in the problems of the poor people who are trying to get housing. If the member is not, then he should go out and have a smoke and smoke whatever he wants out there. He obviously has been into something already.

Is the minister aware that it is not uncommon for people who make application to the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority to wait as long as three months to get a home visit? Does he realize the level of frustration that creates? What can he and the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority do to speed up the home visits so that people's applications can at least be in the process? The frustration people have of not hearing from Ontario Housing and of not knowing whether an application has been accepted is almost as bad as the long wait they have after that.

Hon. Mr. Curling: The member expressed the frustration that thousands of people are facing. I have the honour to represent a riding with 220,000 people in it. A considerable number of those people are waiting to live in rent-geared-to-income units. The member has expressed what has been raised many times, the frustration at the long wait for those home visits and at the long wait to get into one of those units after an application has been approved.

It is obvious that what is causing the problem is the lack of available units for these people. As I said to the member who made her point and then left, the problem cannot be resolved overnight. However, the member might be aware of the appointment of John Sewell as the chairman of the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority, an individual with full-time responsibility to look into those concerns. It is quite applauded because of the respect John Sewell commands in the community for his sensitivity to tenants and for his sensitivity to those people in our projects when he was mayor. While we are increasing our supply we are looking at ways to speed up the process and at whether the process requires more staff or better assessment. I am looking forward to receiving his report very soon. He was just appointed a couple of months ago. He is one of the hardest-working individuals I know. I am

looking forward to his recommendations on how we can address that concern.

Mr. Philip: Surely there is a difference between the waiting list, once somebody is on the list, and the problem he or she has of waiting for the home visit. Surely there are enough capable social workers, or people in other ministries, who can be co-opted for a time to reduce that waiting list. It is the anxiety of not knowing what is happening and of feeling nobody cares that creates a kind of psychological problem for people that is often as bad as the physical need for housing.

I do not understand why it takes a report from John Sewell, who does know the problem—and I have had some conversations with him about it—but surely the minister can add some extra staff and at least get someone out there so the people who have made applications can be visited within a couple of weeks. It may not shorten the time in which they get housing, but at least it gives them some mental comfort that their application is being dealt with.

I want to talk about another subject, the abominable condition of a number of those buildings. All the research I have seen on housing suggests that once buildings start to deteriorate, they have a momentum on their own. If because the building is sloppy, because it has graffiti on the walls, people do not feel any sense of pride, then they in turn end up treating it that way.

What does the minister intend to do in terms of funding an upgrading program so existing housing stock can be cleaned up, screen doors can be put on units and walls that have writing on them and are deteriorating can be corrected, so people can have pride in their buildings and not feel they are living in dumps?

Hon. Mr. Curling: Let me comment quickly. The member asked why one needs John Sewell. All that should be done is to add extra staff and resolve that problem. Once we add staff members, they must know what they are about and what they are going to do. Hence, we had John Sewell look into the problem and point the staff in the right direction.

The member raises a very important point, because the condition of many of those buildings is atrocious. I visited some of them, and I personally would have to be very desperate before I would live in some of those units. That is why I assigned \$110 million to maintenance and repairs in 1987, to address those problems.

One of the first buildings I visited was in Sudbury. What was the name of that unit in

Sudbury? Rumble Terrace. I had a tour around there. I am quite impressed with the improvements made since the year I visited there.

I have also been around to a couple of others. There is one at Birchmount and Finch in my riding. The chairman himself was so concerned about the conditions in the region of Jane-Finch that he invited me on a number of occasions. I know many of them are not in good condition. The Attorney General (Mr. Scott) has had me around Regent Park a couple of times, and there has been good work done in improving the conditions of those buildings.

The \$110 million that will be directed towards maintenance and repairs will give the place a better look, a homy look. Being the largest landlord, so to speak, in Canada, having 80,000 tenants under our jurisdiction and having brought in Bill 51 and said to the private sector, "You had better make sure you have properly maintained buildings," we have to look at ourselves to make sure our buildings are in the same condition or even better.

That is something I take a personal interest in. I take an interest in all the programs within my jurisdiction, but I am extremely concerned about maintenance and repairs. The amount of money that was budgeted for that area will make a tremendous amount of difference.

1750

Mr. Philip: I recognize that the minister did not create the problem, that he has come on it. Part of the problem was created by the minister's predecessor, the member for Ottawa South (Mr. Bennett), who could be called Scrooge times three when it came to putting any kind of money into the projects.

The minister mentions \$110 million that has been allocated. Has Ontario Housing Corp. not done a reconstruction study and put a figure on that? If I am not mistaken, the figure came out at about seven to eight times the amount he has just said he is allocating. I am wondering what his staff is projecting, so that regardless of which government may be in, we can have a 10-year or 5-year program to bring the buildings up to the standards that were suggested in that study that was done not so long ago.

Hon. Mr. Curling: I am quite sure the \$100 million will not address the condition we have. In the 10 years the member asks about, I gather we are projecting to spend \$1 billion to address repairs and maintenance in those buildings. It has reached the stage that some of the buildings are more than 10 or 15 years old, and some extensive repairs have to be done. After the first year, the

\$100 million may not show a dramatic change, but in the 10 years, I am convinced the \$1 billion will definitely make an improvement.

Mr. Philip: One of the things I have been concerned about is that, when I look at Ontario Housing projects, I see spinning within wheels and some moneys being wasted.

When I talk to the staff, some of them tell me they spend a great deal of time inspecting the private tenders or the private construction that could have been done just as easily by the ministry's staff people. Some of the ministry's maintenance people and carpenters tell me they have to go around after the contractors have come in and do repair work on the work that was done. It would be easier for them to do it properly in the first place than to act as spies and whip boys against contractors who are doing sloppy jobs.

Is that a common phenomenon, or am I getting some of the ministry staff who are tooting their own horn and feel that their workmanship is better than someone else's? Is this a commonly reported problem? I believe the ministry's union has made that comment, but I have also heard it from some of the people working in OHC projects in my area.

Hon. Mr. Curling: That is not a common phenomenon, as the member puts it. There are some concerns about how tenders are handled. Again, Mr. Sewell and the board will be looking into all that. We are aware that there are some concerns, but I do not think it is a common situation.

Mr. Philip: Let me make a plea to the minister before he spends the \$110 million or the \$1 billion over a period of 10 years, or whatever it is he is going to spend. One of the problems Ontario Housing has at the local level is that money is spent without any kind of consultation of the tenants. They do not feel part of the process. I am not suggesting the tenants should make a management decision, but often the tenants can have at least some input into what the priorities should be in a given year, and they should have an understanding of how much money is being spent on their project, what decisions are being made and where the tradeoffs are. If there are going to be improvements in the playground this year, if X dollars are going to be spent, it means we will do something else next year. We have to look at that.

It would be very useful if, once a year, every project were costed individually—that would give some comparison between managers and the efficiency of projects—and if there were a general meeting at which members of the community,

such as myself, aldermen or anybody else who may be interested, and tenants could come in and the manager could say: "I have X dollars. Here are some priorities."

When one looks at condominiums where this happens, often the people living there have insights into what can be done and how money can be saved and can influence the priorities or the ranking of the work that has to be done. I wonder whether the minister will consider that a reasonable model to follow before he starts going out and hiring contractors to do a bunch of things that perhaps the tenants will think are irrelevant or rank 10th when numbers one to nine are not being handled.

Hon. Mr. Curling: The member definitely knows the type of approach I use in everything when it comes to the democratic process—consultation. I do not come with any answers. Many times, when we are looking for answers, the answers are right within the people. The member is right; that is one of the things I am looking at. I am doing a tremendous amount of consultation.

I think the member will be happy to know that in Regent Park, where there were some concerns about private space, we went to the people with a group, and they made their recommendations. They were surprised—I was not—that we acted upon their recommendations. The member is right: doing it that way, where people are involved, makes them feel very proud of their contribution in their project.

I have a bit of concern when we make an approach in regards to treating our tenants, that sometimes we have so many layers of bureaucracy going in and so many suggestions. Mr. Chairman, I think it was in your riding that the remark was made that if you walked through one of the Jane-Finch projects, any five-year-old could answer all the sociology research that has been done without being asked. They have been researched to death; they have been asked to death.

If you look at all the private market rental units, there is not so much bureaucracy, people

stumbling over each other, too much policing, too much social work. We have to be very careful, even as we move towards that consultative process, that we do not encroach upon these people's privacy, their ability to do for themselves and, if one wants to put it that way, to make their own mistakes and correct them. Too often, when this is done, we have more problems.

The policing in some of those units is of great concern to me. Policing, meaning overpolicing, is causing all these problems. Those are things we are looking at. Therefore, when the member requests consultation, we must be aware that we do not encroach upon those individuals' rights.

On motion by Hon. Mr. Nixon, the committee of supply reported progress.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Mr. Speaker, I would like to indicate the business of the House for the coming week.

On Monday, January 26, we will continue with the estimates of the Ministry of Housing, followed by the following legislation: Bill 186, election finances; Bill 163, repeal of inflation restraint; Bill 164, repeal of farm loans; Bill 156, securities legislation; Bill 74, operating engineers; Bill 63, travel industry; Bill 127, surveyors, and Bill 166, game and fish.

On Tuesday, January 27, we will continue with legislation not considered on Monday.

On Wednesday, January 28, we will deal with Bill 161, courts of justice, and Bill 154, pay equity.

On Thursday morning, January 29, we will consider private members' public business standing in the names of the member for St. Andrew-St. Patrick (Mr. Grossman) and of the member for Ottawa Centre (Ms. Gigantes). On Thursday afternoon, we will complete the estimates of the Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs, the Office of the Lieutenant Governor, the Office of the Premier and the Cabinet Office.

The House adjourned at 6:01 p.m.

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 Peterson, Hon. D. R., Premier and President of the Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of Northern Development and Mines (London Centre L)
 Philip, E. T. (Etobicoke NDP)
 Pollock, J. (Hastings-Peterborough PC)
 Polsinelli, C. (Yorkview L)

Rae, R. K. (York South NDP)
Reville, D. (Riverdale NDP)
Reycraft, D. R. (Middlesex L)
Rowe, W. E. (Simcoe Centre PC)
Ruprecht, Hon. T., Minister without Portfolio (Parkdale L)
Shymko, Y. R. (High Park-Swansea PC)
Sterling, N. W. (Carleton-Grenville PC)
Swart, M. L. (Welland-Thorold NDP)
Treleaven, R. L., Deputy Speaker and Chairman of the Committees of the Whole House (Oxford PC)
Wildman, B. (Algoma NDP)



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Second Session, 33rd Parliament
Monday, January 26, 1987

Speaker: Honourable H. A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday, January 26, 1987

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' PRIVILEGES

Hon. Mr. Nixon: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: You may recall on Thursday last the member for Brantford (Mr. Gillies) on a point of order recounted to the House the situation in which he was involved in the standing committee on public accounts, of which he is a member. He was served with legal papers in circumstances that fly in the face of all the requirements, procedures and precedents of this House and its members.

He indicated, and got agreement on all sides, that whether or not he should be subject to the serving of papers having to do with a civil case, which we in this House feel is not possible under the provisions of the Legislative Assembly Act and our precedents, it was the most heinous thing that he be served in that very committee at the time when it was dealing with matters that in some respects were associated with the papers being served.

An affidavit has been made public through the press gallery—I am not sure whether it was made available to you, Mr. Speaker—which I want to bring to the attention of the House because I feel it concerns me personally. After participating in the general discussion and sending the whole smelly matter off to the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly for review, I was asked for comment. I went out and was particularly critical of the process servers and the legal firm—Stikeman, Elliott—that had undertaken a procedure that was obviously against our laws and our traditions.

I even indicated as clearly as I could that I thought the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly might very well find that the lawyer who authorized the service might find that his professional services were no longer required by the community of Ontario. I did not use the word “disbarment,” although it was in my mind.

I will quote briefly from the affidavit that has been made available, which was signed by the chief of the agency that undertook the service that was discussed:

“I have previously served members of the Legislature at Queen’s Park, and my standard practice in such cases is to phone the member in advance to arrange a mutually convenient time for service. Accordingly, on Tuesday, January 20, 1987, I phoned Mr. Gillies’s office at Queen’s Park and spoke with Ms. Lyn Artmont, whom I understood to be Mr. Gillies’s executive assistant. I explained to Ms. Artmont that I had legal documents from the firm of Stikeman, Elliott to serve on Mr. Gillies and herself personally and wished to make arrangements to serve them at a convenient time.

“Ms. Artmont advised me that Mr. Gillies was out of town but would be in the public accounts committee, room 151 at Queen’s Park, on Thursday morning and that both of them would be served at that time and at that place.

“I informed Ms. Artmont that I did not wish to interrupt any government proceedings and inquired whether it would be appropriate to serve Mr. Gillies at that time. Ms. Artmont said that it would be quite all right and that I was to go into the committee room and would recognize her because she would be the only woman in the room. She stated that I would recognize Mr. Gillies because he would be sitting at a chair at the committee table behind his nameplate.”

The affidavit goes on to describe in detail specifically what occurred. I still maintain that a service under these circumstances is not appropriate. In fact, I do not believe it is legal under the Legislative Assembly Act nor our custom. However, I must say I object to the presentation of the facts associated with the service, which led an easily led person such as myself to go out and offer criticism of an individual based on the facts that had been presented in good faith to all members of the House.

If, in fact, the service had been arranged by the member for Brantford and his employee, then I really feel as a member of this House—I would not say I was misinformed—I was seriously inadequately informed on the basis of the information put to the House by the member for Brantford, who was stating that his privileges had been abrogated.

This is the first chance I have been able to have to bring this to your attention, sir. I know

members of the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly are present. As for me, I am going to ask our colleagues on the committee to raise this matter when it is reviewed so that the facts of the service and all those matters pertaining to it will be fully aired.

I wanted to get up in the House under these circumstances and express my personal objection both to the way the thing was handled by the honourable member in the House and the fact that the process was served under these circumstances, which I feel is unacceptable.

Mr. Andrewes: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure the Treasurer, the member for Brant-Oxford-Norfolk, has a point of order, but I assume you have granted him the privilege of airing this issue, which he calls "a smelly matter," in front of the House. It appears he is making some degree of assumption relative to the affidavit that was served and the matters that transpired last Thursday during the meeting of the standing committee on public accounts.

I think the appropriate place for this discussion to take place is in the Legislative Assembly committee. I am sure it will consider this document during its deliberations, as it will consider all other matters relevant to this situation. It is very important that we not forget the broader issue and not try to shelter that broader issue by dealing with narrower issues of detail.

Interjection.

Mr. Andrewes: The honourable member laughs.

Perhaps the appropriate time at which these matters can best come forward is in that committee.

Mr. McClellan: I have to confess to sharing many of the same feelings about this matter as my colleague the government House leader. The only thing I would say at this time is that obviously the full circumstances need to be reviewed by the committee on the Legislative Assembly, including whether there was prior knowledge of these documents being served on the member for Brantford and what exactly were the arrangements for the serving of these papers. I have every confidence these matters will be thoroughly pursued by the Legislative Assembly committee.

1340

Mr. Speaker: I have listened very carefully to the comments by the three members who have spoken. Following the discussion that took place last Thursday and the fact that the House sent the

matter to the Legislative Assembly committee, I am certain, because it was brought up today and is on record, that the appropriate place it should go, as suggested by one of the people speaking, is to that committee. I hope the members so concerned will make certain it is brought up before that committee.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Mr. Speaker, I should have mentioned in my point of order that I intended to table a copy of the affidavit. It is public and has been circulated to the press gallery, but so that it is officially seized by the Clerk of the House, I ask one of the pages to give it to him to seize.

ARGOSY FINANCIAL GROUP OF CANADA

Mr. Speaker: Today I would like to inform the members that I have tabled the report of the Ombudsman's opinion, reasons therefor and recommendations following his investigation into the complaints concerning Argosy Financial Group of Canada.

Mr. Philip: On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker: Concerning the report that was tabled, I confirmed with the Ombudsman that no copies of that report were leaked to the press or to anyone else, that it was tabled appropriately with you and with the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly. We know the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations and Financial Institutions (Mr. Kwinter) would have had that report for at least a month. We know the Office of the Premier has had the report since last Thursday.

We have another example of a report that has been leaked to the media before members of the committee or members of this assembly have had an opportunity to receive it first. I ask that you kindly investigate why such leaks of reports seem to have been coming over and over again since this government took power.

Mr. Speaker: I do not know whether I have the right to conduct such an investigation. To my knowledge, I received the report today and I tabled it today. That is the only information I have.

VISITOR

Mr. Speaker: I ask all members of the Legislative Assembly to join with me in recognizing and welcoming in the Speaker's gallery a member of the House of Lords, the Right Honourable Lord Shaughnessy. Please join me in welcoming Lord Shaughnessy.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

PEEL CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Mr. J. M. Johnson: I would like to bring to the attention of the House the very serious

problem pertaining to the amalgamation of the Charlestown Residential School in Caledon with Peel Children's Services, operating under the control of the Ministry of Community and Social Services. This amalgamation has created serious economic and emotional strains on the parents of the children involved in the Charlestown program and has caused considerable anxiety throughout the community of Caledon.

While this transfer took place on April 1, 1986, many of the legal matters pertaining to it have not yet been resolved. The board of directors of Charlestown would like to meet with the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney) and members of the board of Peel Children's Services to see whether these unresolved issues can be clarified and decisions made in the best interests of the children who reside at the school. As this situation has been ongoing for several months, let us hope the Minister of Community and Social Services will agree to meet with the principals in the near future.

ALGOMA CENTRAL RAILWAY

Mr. Wildman: I rise to make a statement with regard to the press release issued last Thursday by Algoma Steel Corp. with regard to the Algoma Ore division operations in Wawa. It is most unfortunate that the management of Algoma Steel Corp. decided to release such a statement at this point in very delicate negotiations. As the company itself admitted, the negotiations are ongoing, involving the federal government, the provincial government, Algoma Steel Corp. and the Algoma Central Railway, and progress has been made. If they were going to make any statement, that is the one they should have made and they should have left it at that.

It was most inappropriate to include in such a statement what can only be characterized as a threat to the community of Wawa and the workers at Algoma Ore division. If this government is going to continue negotiations, and I hope it does, it must be prepared to demand job guarantees from both Algoma Steel Corp. and the Algoma Central Railway before any suggestion of subsidization should be completed.

HOSPITAL BEDS

Mr. Andrewes: On January 7, the St. Catharines Standard carried a story about 83-year-old Konrad Michalsky, who had spent the night with 17 other patients on stretchers in the emergency room of St. Catharines General Hospital because no beds were available.

What warrants our concern is that this incident is not an isolated occurrence. Hospital overcrowding has become a chronic problem, not only in the St. Catharines area hospitals but also across the entire province. In order not to tie up beds reserved for surgical patients, patients must wait in the emergency department for an appropriate bed, in some instances for up to a week. The noisy, draughty environment and the total lack of privacy put added stress on patients and doctors alike and do little to enhance the quality of care that can be provided.

Doctors have been coping as best they can, discharging their patients a day or two earlier when possible, and beds are allotted to those who are in greatest need. The problem is that we cannot put sickness on hold. Our rapidly ageing population continues to make increasing demands on our health care system. I think the House will agree that this is not a trend that is likely to reverse itself in the near future.

I hope the government will move rapidly to ensure that Mr. Michalsky and others like him have access to first-class treatment in our hospitals. The current crisis management situation falls far short of such guarantees.

HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION

Mr. Cousens: I am pleased to make a presentation to the Minister of Transportation and Communications (Mr. Fulton). For some time, he has received formal delegations from our community, from the mayor of Vaughan, the mayor of Markham and the mayor of Richmond Hill, looking for support from the Ontario government for the new highway, Highway 407, that would go north of Highway 401.

We in our community in south York region and north Metro Toronto are experiencing great problems because of the lack of good communication routes. The land has been purchased and set aside. What we are waiting for from the Ministry of Transportation and Communications is a date when it will commit itself to the beginning of this important route. The first place to start is here in the Legislature, through the Minister of Transportation and Communications, the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) and Management Board, with approval of the much-needed money.

Whenever a road is built, approximately 90 cents of every dollar go back into the community. For the long-term future, it generates wealth for the whole community because it allows people not only to get to work but also to ship their

goods. It allows the economy and the whole society in which we live to prosper.

To help the minister get a feel for it, I would like to have a bumper banner placed on his car—it is purely up to him to do so—"407 in '87," a slogan by the mayor of Vaughan, Mrs. Jackson. We hope it will become a slogan for our Minister of Transportation and Communications—"407 in '87."

1350

LABOUR DISPUTE

Mr. Breagh: I bring to the attention of the Legislature a rather unfortunate set of facts in the dispute between Atlantic Sugar and Local 222 of the Canadian Auto Workers. There was a rather difficult set of negotiations throughout the fall. Shortly before Christmas, the company decided unilaterally to lock out its work force.

Since that time, Ontario law apparently has absolutely nothing to say about lockouts or justification for lockouts, or even about the company providing to the public, to the community and to its employees some reason that the lockout occurred. The sad fact now remains that we have members of that local locked out of their place of work. The company has been asked repeatedly to give the reasons for the lockout and has declined to comment.

Ontario law apparently has a spot in it where there is no requirement on the part of the company to provide even an indication of how long this lockout might continue, whether this is a permanent closure of a facility, or a temporary closure, or a layoff situation, or whether it intends to bargain again. To our knowledge, the Ministry of Labour has not intervened in any meaningful way to bring those negotiations back on track.

I suggest that the Ontario government has an obligation to review the provisions of Ontario labour law that allow this type of situation to go on.

ADULTS-ONLY APARTMENTS

Mr. Gregory: With regard to the bill dealing with adults-only buildings, that is, Bill 7, I have received a great number of telephone calls and letters and have had many conversations with senior citizens who find themselves very much offended by the actions of the present government with regard to condominiums. In many of these cases, senior citizens have sold their homes with the intention of living in condominiums. They have made offers to purchase, accompanied with deposits, only to find that they are now

forced to accept the situation that has been imposed on them by the government; that is, they are no longer adults-only condominiums.

I find this very distressing. I hope someone on the government side—now that it has made this mess—is prepared to recompense the people who have made deposits. If they withdraw from those deals, they will be obliged to pay out of their own pockets and lose their deposits. I suggest the government, which has caused this mess, should be prepared to recompense them for that loss.

I believe this is a very unnecessary thing. It could have been avoided had it not been for Liberal intransigence on the amendments that were offered by this party. I suggest that the Minister of Housing (Mr. Curling) take a very close look at this matter, because it has become very serious to some of these senior citizens who intended to buy condominiums.

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mr. Andrewes: I have a letter from the Niagara Centre for Youth Care, the provincially licensed children's mental health centre for the Niagara region. It points out a number of concerns relative to its current funding situation, which increasingly prevents young people in the Niagara region from having access to its services.

It says that, critically, 55 per cent of its clients are from the city of St. Catharines because no expansion dollars are being directed towards Niagara children's mental health services to permit the establishment of services outside the immediate vicinity. This is an admission of frustration on the part of the agency but, more specifically, that the \$10.80 per capita funding across the province compares very poorly with the \$4.25 per capita funding in the Niagara region.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETIES

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I have an exceptionally pleasant duty to perform at this time. It is to congratulate the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies on the 75th anniversary of its founding, in the year 1912. I am sure that all members of this Legislature will want to join with me in offering their congratulations as well.

Child welfare in Canada can be said to date from 1893, when the Ontario Legislature passed An Act for the Prevention of Cruelty to, and Better Protection of, Children. This act provided for the establishment of children's aid societies.

The act gave these societies—and several of them had already been set up—legal powers to intervene where there was neglect or cruelty and to arrange foster care for children who were being mistreated at home.

Then in 1912, the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies came into being, the hub of the wheel that had already begun to turn towards providing help for some of the province's youngest and yet most important citizens.

Ontario is proud of the work done by the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies and its constituent members. We are proud to honour those who so diligently continue and enhance the work of John Joseph Kelso, who was the chief architect of measures to provide child welfare in this province.

Through the early years of this century when a large number of immigrants, many of them children, flocked into Ontario; through the Depression years of the 1930s when survival itself was the major concern of many families; through the Second World War, which produced the first latchkey children, members of the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies did not shirk their role in helping children and their families. That singleness of purpose has never slackened. It remained evident in the years after the Second World War in what became known as the era of the baby-boomers. In our own time of rapid and ever-increasing changes in mores, family groupings and lifestyles, the role of the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies has become increasingly important.

My ministry has particular reason to appreciate the active presence of the association. Our working together has achieved an effective consensus in bringing help to children and their families. Among recent examples of such efforts are the revision of the Child Welfare Act in the 1960s, the consultation around the Child and Family Services Act in the 1980s, the development of the initial child abuse standards and guidelines in 1981, and even more recently, the proposed revisions to legislation dealing with adoption disclosure.

As I look towards the future, I am heartened by the certainty that my ministry and the association will continue to move forward together to help create a climate of society in which our children can develop and move confidently into the world of tomorrow.

I notice representatives of the association in the visitor's gallery and to them I want to say, "Congratulations to you, the Ontario Association

of Children's Aid Societies, on your work and on your 75th anniversary."

LIQUOR CONTROL BOARD OF ONTARIO

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I am sure members are aware of the highly critical comments made by a provincial court judge in Toronto last week concerning the operations and management of the Liquor Control Board of Ontario. The criticism came out in Judge D. T. Hogg's findings following the trial of a liquor store manager for fraud.

Before I touch briefly on the major areas of Judge Hogg's comments, I want to assure the members that I take such criticism very seriously. The LCBO is a monopoly empowered by law to distribute and sell alcoholic beverages in Ontario. Operating as it does without competition, it has both a moral and legal responsibility to carry out its unique role with the greatest possible efficiency and integrity. To do otherwise is a clear abuse of public trust.

We are already aware of some of the problems identified by Judge Hogg. It is not new to say that, in response, changes and improvements are definitely under way. None the less, I still find these criticisms most disturbing and I know LCBO Chairman Jack Ackroyd finds them disturbing as well.

On Friday, I informed Mr. Ackroyd that I expect a full and comprehensive report on the success of the LCBO's ongoing plans to upgrade both its operations and management. In the interim, I have directed Mr. Ackroyd to carry out an immediate review of the LCBO's management capacity. If he finds any shortfall in this regard, I have informed him that he has my full support in taking whatever action is required. To accelerate the improvements already under way and to focus the board's energies on the problem areas referred to by both the recent Provincial Auditor's report and Judge Hogg, I have urged Mr. Ackroyd to retain outside management support and expertise immediately.

I feel it is important that the members have a brief overview of what has been going on at the LCBO in the key areas of Judge Hogg's criticism.

With reference to his statements regarding the management of the board, the chairman had already identified this problem and a firm of business consultants was engaged to review the senior management structure completely. Their recommendation that we create three executive vice-presidents reporting directly to the chairman has been carried out. The key position of

executive vice-president of administration was filled by seconding a senior administrator from my ministry just four months ago.

1400

As members will recall, Justice John Osler raised this issue during the royal commission in 1986, and after hearing extensive testimony from the chairman and senior staff, was satisfied that appropriate steps were being taken to rectify problem areas.

Prior to Judge Hogg's criticism, the LCBO was reviewing its financial, auditing and accounting systems. A major accounting firm will soon be retained to review the board's accounting and auditing procedures. Its first priority will be an immediate review of financial control and practices. The LCBO has also gone to tender on a computerized cash register system that will address the judge's concern about the need to have a printed record of each liquor sale.

I have previously addressed the matter of the Durham warehouse in this House. Most of the details presented in the case before Judge Hogg occurred during the startup of the facility. While the operation of this warehouse has improved, it is not yet at 100 per cent efficiency. The board had a professional engineering firm audit the system last summer, and its recommendations are now being implemented. It should be remembered that in facilities of this size and sophistication it takes time to become completely operational. I am satisfied that we are making steady progress in this regard.

Judge Hogg criticized the board's security arrangements. About two years ago, the LCBO seconded Sergeant Kevin Balch from the Metropolitan Toronto Police to deal with its security problems. He has carried out several security studies and many improvements have been made, including an increase in security staff and prosecutions.

To put losses to theft and pilferage into perspective, it should be understood that the Retail Business Council of Canada finds that average losses in other large retailers about are about 15 times greater than those at the LCBO.

My comments are not to be seen as a defence against criticism but rather an effort to put the overall issue in context. I want to assure the Legislature that major improvements in the operation and management of this large and important institution must and will be made. Whatever it takes, we will do. The people of Ontario deserve nothing less.

Mr. Gillies: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I understand that earlier you allowed a point of

order by the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) regarding the events of last Thursday. In view of the fact that it was allowed and I was absent, I wonder whether you would allow me the opportunity to speak to the point.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed?

Agreed to.

MEMBERS' PRIVILEGES

Mr. Gillies: The Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) apparently sees his role in this matter to be that of an agent for the law firm of Stikeman, Elliott, which, as I understand it, brought an affidavit into the House that calls into question the events of last week. For the record, I want all members of the House to understand the facts, as I do, facts that are apparently misunderstood by the law firm Stikeman, Elliott.

On Monday last week, when I was on business for my party in Ottawa, the agent for the law firm of Stikeman, Elliott called my office and asked when I would be available that week to receive a hand-delivered letter from that law firm. My schedule for the subsequent four days was given to that agent over the phone. They were told I would be out of town on Monday and on Tuesday morning. They were told where I would be on Tuesday afternoon, Wednesday and Thursday of last week. The implication, either in the affidavit or in the comments of the Treasurer—and, incidentally, in the comments of the leader of the third party in Brantford on Friday—was that an appointment had been made between my assistant and the law firm to appear at the standing committee on public accounts and serve me with the writ at that time.

There are two very key points here: (1) No such appointment was made, nor would I have advised any member of my staff to make such an appointment. (2) The implication, which I took from press reports of the leader of the third party's comments in Brantford, that I had any prior knowledge of the incidents that occurred on Thursday morning of last week is completely false and scurrilous. I believe the leader of the third party, if indeed he made the comments referred to in the Brantford Expositor, owes me an apology for calling into question my word on this matter.

I also want to disabuse the Treasurer, the House or anyone else on this point: I had no prior knowledge of the intentions of the law firm Stikeman, Elliott and neither Ms. Artmont nor myself would have counselled them to make such a presentation before the committee.

Mr. Speaker: I am sure the committee will review the matter extensively.

RESPONSES

CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETIES

Mr. Cousens: We celebrate an important anniversary today for the children's aid societies in Ontario. Seventy-five years of service to young people and children within our community is something we should all stop and remember. We should realize it is no accident that the children's aid societies are performing their function in a most professional and careful way, keeping in mind the needs of our children.

People such as George Caldwell, the executive director of the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies, represent and are typical of the kind of dedication we have seen with children's aid societies for these many years. It starts with professional people with a deep and genuine concern for the welfare and wellbeing of our young people, who are able to give of themselves in a selfless way so that these children will have a chance. Whether it be through counselling, support mechanisms, adoption or a number of different services that the children's aid society offers, it is one place in this province that people know there is a group doing a job that counts.

I share in this day of celebration for the children's aid societies, as do all members of this Legislature, realizing that the key is the quality of the people who are performing these functions. Let us hope the next 75 years are not as fraught with problems the past year has been. We saw two major strikes, one in Metropolitan Toronto and one in Ottawa, each caused in part by a breakdown in the province's providing funding to the societies to provide the services that are essential. Perhaps today on this 75th anniversary the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) can look at his books to see whether there are any additional funds that can be invested, not spent, for the wellbeing and care of our children.

There is a second concern that should be on our minds as we celebrate this anniversary, and that is the important role of the volunteers who run the different children's aid societies in this province. Again, these are people who care about young people and very much want the children's aid societies to reach their goals. I detect an increasing sense of frustration on the part of those volunteer boards with the amount of government interference, regulation and control and with government being late with its funding. Can they continue to be able to make the kind of contribution they want to or are they being more

and more controlled by a government that wants to take over?

We would not survive in this province if we did not have strong volunteer boards continuing to make a contribution. In the future we should have an emphasis to continue to build and strengthen those boards so that they will be able to fulfil their jobs in an honourable, complete and satisfactory way. There is now a sense of frustration on these boards that they are being held back and controlled. I hope the next 75 years will see these boards proceed with the fresh vigour and confidence that can be instilled when there is a trusting relationship between the government of Ontario and the local boards. That relationship is deteriorating. It is weakening because of the breakdown between this government and those groups.

There must be an ingredient of trust and a sense of purpose within those boards. That trust is not as prevalent now as it was a couple of years ago. I challenge the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney) and the government not to allow these volunteer boards to be destroyed or to disappear. Part of the strength of the children's aid societies is the personal representation by volunteers who care. The combination of the three working together—the government of Ontario, the professional staff and the volunteer boards—to serve our young people has to be the way to do it. Our young people are our best and most valuable resource.

1410

As we celebrate this 75th anniversary, may the children's aid societies continue to do their job but with the support mechanisms around them to allow them to do it as well as they have in the past.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: It is a privilege to respond on behalf of the New Democratic Party, to join in the congratulations on the 75th anniversary of the children's aid societies in Ontario and to welcome here prominent members of the provincial association.

The CASs have had an impossible task over the years, which has often been made more impossible by succeeding governments. They have been given the responsibility of protecting the children who are most vulnerable in our society and of intervening in the sacred family unit as an arm of the state in such a way as to look after the best interests of these children. To do that at any time is a difficult thing and often requires the wisdom of Solomon.

There have been many occasions during the 75 years of the children's aid societies when they

might have wished they had not been charged with that responsibility in individual cases. I think back to the Kim Anne Popen case and other cases of child abuse and child death in Ontario and to the way the children's aid societies were often left holding the bag for government incompetence, lack of training and lack of funding. Their history has not been an easy one.

In recent years, we have made it even more difficult. We have changed the Child and Family Services Act in such a way as to require of the children's aid societies a major preventive role, a role of trying to slow down and stop the numbers of children who are taken into care and become wards of the state, of trying to intervene with their families beforehand to allow them to maintain themselves as a normal, functioning family.

The CASs have been asked to do this at a time when they have been given decreased amounts of funding. They have been used as a buffer by past governments, and I regret to say by this government, even though its members used to complain when they were in opposition about the way the government of Ontario would restrict increases to the children's aid societies to four per cent or the like and then expect them to produce extra programs to prevent harm coming to our most vulnerable children.

The Minister of Community and Social Services and his colleagues now do exactly the same thing, causing labour unrest in various parts of this province among the children's aid societies, at the same time as they and the past government were willing to intervene in places such as Kenora and take over the agency there when its demands for more money to do its impossible task got too large.

It is perhaps a time, at the 75th anniversary, when we should review the roles of the children's aid societies and the way the local boards are manipulated and used by government and come up with a system which either gives them the real independence we want for them and proper funding to protect children or puts the responsibility back properly with the government, which seems to want to duck that responsibility most of the time.

LIQUOR CONTROL BOARD OF ONTARIO

Mr. Swart: I want to say a few words about the statement made by the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Mr. Kwinter). I am sure he would agree and everyone else in this House would agree with me that we have to be concerned about the degree of discredit now

taking place with regard to our public institutions and, for that matter, our democratic government.

What is happening in Ottawa, the resignation of three cabinet ministers here, and now this latest report on the Liquor Control Board of Ontario, is certainly making the public more cynical than ever about public institutions. What Judge Hogg has said is a pretty serious condemnation of what has been going on in the LCBO. The changes the minister proposes and the changes that have already taken place seem to deal with establishing a system that will inhibit these practices in the future. I commend him for bringing them in, but the policing has to be effective and ongoing.

The calls that I and many other members have received over the years have implied corruption, and I suggest to the minister that it runs very deep. Those who have been involved in this at every level should be disciplined. I am not sure the minister's statement goes far enough in that regard.

Mr. Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Swart: He has to be prepared to take the necessary disciplinary steps that may be necessary to assure that this political can of worms is finally—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Would the honourable member please take his seat. That completes the allotted time for ministers' statements and responses.

ORAL QUESTIONS

ACQUIRED IMMUNE DEFICIENCY SYNDROME

Mr. Andrewes: My question is to the Minister of Education. Can he tell us what discussions he has undertaken with school boards and the Ministry of Health regarding educational programs in our school system on the AIDS virus?

Hon. Mr. Conway: As the honourable member knows, it was just over a year ago, working with my colleague the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston), that we prepared a fact sheet and other related materials on this matter. We had that material disseminated through the Ontario school system, and we have been working with others in the school community to ensure that there is proper leadership and sensitivity in this area. I assure the member that we in the Ministry of Education will continue to do everything we can to react to the current situation.

Mr. Andrewes: Given the fact that the Ministry of Health's contribution in terms of education and support appears to be around the \$200,000 mark—and that compares to a total budget of that ministry of \$10 billion—given the fact that in Britain alone some \$40 million has now been committed to education and publicity to try to acquaint people with the serious problems of the AIDS virus, and given the fact that the Minister of Health's recent response to a question relative to AIDS was that people were best advised to "exercise caution," when might we expect the Minister of Education to take some greater initiatives that would provide a better understanding of the virus and encourage preventive health programs to limit the spread of AIDS?

Hon. Mr. Conway: What we have done to date has been well received and, in our view, positive. There is more to be done, to be sure. Very shortly, we will be publishing our new guidelines for health and physical education, which will deal with AIDS. I recall to the member's attention very wise counsel offered by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Grossman), who, speaking to the subject some time ago, indicated it was a matter where local school authorities had an important role to play and that we had to be very careful we took such action as was sensitive to community situations.

In the coming weeks, we will be working with others in the educational community to ensure that every reasonable action that can be done in the area of health and education will be done.

Ms. Fish: As the minister is aware, the growing concern about the spread of AIDS exists particularly among young people who have been sexually active and sexually experimental. The minister is also aware that the Toronto Board of Education filed a request with his ministry more than a year ago to receive curriculum guidelines on teaching about AIDS and the prevention of the spread of AIDS within Toronto schools. It is still awaiting a reply. Will the minister share with us when he is prepared to issue a full and complete curriculum for teaching about AIDS and its prevention within the public schools?

Hon. Mr. Conway: As I indicated a moment ago, our health and phys-ed guideline is being revised to take this situation, among others, into account. I expect that guideline will be available for distribution in the not-too-distant future. I know of the honourable member's interest. She can rest assured I will keep her fully informed.

NORTHERN HEALTH SERVICES

Mr. Andrewes: My question is to the Minister of Health. On November 13, 1986, I raised with the minister the fact that the community of Elliot Lake was without the necessary anaesthetic services. Now in the depths of winter when emergency transportation becomes an increasing problem, that situation, as we understand it, is unchanged. Can the minister tell us when he is going to resolve this health care accessibility problem?

Hon. Mr. Elston: The honourable member will be pleased to know that the Ministry of Health has been working in concert with the people in the community of Elliot Lake to bring all possible applicants who are interested in Elliot Lake to the attention of the local hospital and facilities. I understand there are people who are interested in practising there. In the meantime, there are locums in place to provide anaesthetic services in Elliot Lake.

Mr. Andrewes: This comes from the spokesman for a government that was going to make health care accessibility a priority.

Let me try another one. Last week in the community of Marathon, Jim Marzolf, a drug store operator and pharmacist operating the Marathon Drug Association Ltd., opted out of the Ontario drug benefit plan. This now leaves some 200 residents, most of them senior citizens, without local access to prescriptions under the ODB plan.

Mr. Marzolf withdrew from the program because of the ministry's failure to compensate him properly for the prescriptions he filled under the plan. Can the minister tell us when he is going to resolve this health care accessibility problem?

Hon. Mr. Elston: Again, the member will be pleased to know that the Ministry of Health has been making arrangements with respect to the people in Marathon. An article I read indicated there were about 150 seniors and people on social assistance programs. Arrangements have now been made for the supply of medications, either through the local pharmacy, which is getting in touch with other pharmacies to have the medications delivered, or through other arrangements that are being put in place.

We are well aware of the Marathon situation and we have taken steps to assist those people to get their medications.

Mr. Pierce: By way of supplementary, I do not think it is a question of the minister not being aware of the problems that are being put forward by the communities in northern Ontario.

As of January 1, 1987, the community of Atikokan, which has a population of 40,000, no longer has an anaesthesiologist and no longer has a surgeon. Mothers of small children who require minor operations for tonsillitis and appendicitis must now travel 200 miles to a doctor. It requires additional time spent in the community waiting for the child to be released from the hospital.

When the minister talks about being aware of the situation, that is all well and good. We are all aware of it. When is the minister going to do something about it? When is he going to make doctors available to the people in northern Ontario who require them?

Hon. Mr. Elston: The honourable member raised a similar question in estimates last week, and I thanked him for his suggestion at that time. He also suggested that, in terms of accessibility to professionals, we should consider the British Columbia situation, where professionals are directed by the government before licensure to take up residence in certain areas.

This government is not using the BC situation, in which the issuance of licences is used to direct people to particular communities. At this stage, we are following the incentive programs that we believe will assist people to be accommodated in the smaller, less urban centres for practice purposes. We are also pursuing actions that will help specialists to travel to smaller centres.

Overall, the accessibility of health care in northern Ontario has been heightened by our determination to improve such services as the ambulance programs and specialist programs. I know the people of northern Ontario have been quite pleased with the increased interest our government has shown, not only in health care but also in all aspects of life and wellbeing in the northern reaches of this province. I am very sure the honourable gentleman would like to indicate that the northern health travel grant is helping.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr. Rae: I have a question for the Minister of Financial Institutions about a subject I know is near and dear to his heart, the subject of car insurance. Statistics Canada has just come out with a new set of figures for the first three quarters of 1986 with respect to car insurance across Canada. These figures show that, for the first three quarters of 1986, the insurance companies on underwriting alone—that is, the difference between claims paid out and premiums received—made \$497 million. That is only car insurance companies.

Can the minister indicate his views and the views of the Liberal Party with respect to that kind of difference between money taken in and claims paid out?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I thank the leader of the third party for his question. However, he neglected to break down the figures. I am sure he will admit, if he looks at the figures, that notwithstanding the broad statement about what the profits were, in Ontario in automobile insurance alone, when it comes to underwriting profit, the insurance companies still pay out more in claims than they take in as premiums.

Mr. Rae: That is not the information we have from Statistics Canada. The only statistics we have from the minister and his ministry date back to 1984. If he has some more recent statistics to provide to the House, he has not been giving them for the past two years.

However, in the light of this information from Statistics Canada, how does the minister feel about the most recent set of television ads being run by the Insurance Bureau of Canada? I have the advertising copy supplied to me by the Vickers and Benson advertising company, advertisers for the Insurance Bureau of Canada. They make a series of claims. They say at the end of one ad, which I am sure the minister may have seen, "We want you to know that the cost of your insurance is driven by what it costs to insure you and nothing more."

In the light of the facts I have just given the minister from Statistics Canada, does he feel this is a fair and accurate account of how money works in the insurance business today?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The member will know, as I have said before and I am certainly prepared to back it up—and if he takes a look at the Statistics Canada figures, he will see it is true—in Ontario the insurance company is in a negative position when it comes to underwriting profits.

That having been said, the member should also know this does have a direct relationship. Even before the western provinces got into the insurance business, the underwriting costs in Ontario were always almost double. The loss ratios in Ontario are almost double those of every other jurisdiction in Canada, and that has nothing to do with the companies themselves. It has to do with the fact that we have the largest concentration of drivers. I have told the member this before. In all of Manitoba, there are 600,000 drivers; we have six million.

The member should know, and I am sure he will welcome this information, that in November I stated that the Manitoba automobile insurance

plan thought it was going to lose \$4 million. In December, it thought it was going to lose \$10 million. On January 12, the Winnipeg Free Press stated—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Perhaps the minister would like to—

Mr. Rae: I am fascinated by what the minister has to tell us. We can have an argument in this place and outside about the facts of the case. However, there are now ads taking place across Ontario for a very well-known reason. Those ads have a political purpose. What I am trying to get the minister to say is whether he thinks the ads, which are being placed by his very good friends in the insurance bureau, are a fair and accurate assessment of what is going on in the insurance business in this province, and indeed in Canada.

Is it a fair statement to say, “We want you to know that the cost of your insurance is driven by what it costs to insure you and nothing more”? Is it fair to say that there are no other factors involved, such as a little thing called profit, when it comes to what the car insurance companies in this province are bilking the car drivers of Ontario?

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Hon. Mr. Kwinter: Far be it from me to comment on the merits and benefits of advertising. The New Democratic Party has taken it upon itself to enter into an advertising campaign, and no one has asked me whether I think there is any merit in its campaign. I would suggest that when it comes to the industry, it is a free market. It has the opportunity and the privilege of stating its case to the public, and whether the public buy it or not is their business.

Mr. Rae: It is nice to know we have a Minister of Financial Institutions who is out there to protect the consumer.

NIAGARA RIVER WATER QUALITY

Mr. Rae: I have a question for the Minister of the Environment. Can the minister explain the following set of facts? Can he explain why we are now at the 11th hour in our relationship with the state of New York; the Durez site property and the dumping of chemicals by Occidental; the extraordinary information that has not been made available to this House by the minister but that he has apparently shared with his colleague in New York, Hank Williams?

Can the minister explain why all of this has taken place; why we in Ontario are in the dark with respect to the degree of dioxin poisoning, when the minister apparently has information;

why the ministry's response has been so utterly ineffectual; and why, at the 11th hour, we still have no guarantee that that site is going to be cleaned up in a way that will preserve, inasmuch as it can now be preserved, the integrity and quality of the Niagara River?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I am glad the member for York South has raised an issue of this kind. He would know that since I have been the Minister of the Environment, one of the issues I have consistently been pressing with our American neighbours has been the situation that exists in Niagara Falls, New York.

One of the reasons we do not have an agreement that has been signed with the Americans—I have been criticized in many quarters for this—in terms of an overall accord in this issue is that I have refused to sign such an agreement until such time as we have in such an agreement a specific schedule for the reduction of contaminants and a specific percentage of reduction that would be agreed to by both sides. In addition to this, I have asked for a meaningful reference to the excavation of those sites immediately adjacent to the river.

My ministry and officials of my ministry have communicated to our American neighbours on many occasions our concern about the situation as it relates to contaminants on the other side and our demands that they be cleaned up. We will continue to press this case, as we have in the past, and I would expect that, as a result of the continuing efforts and the support of the member for York South and others in this House, our voice will be added to. However, I assure the member that on very many occasions here in Canada, in the United States and in New York state I have put forward that case.

Mr. Rae: The minister really cannot be allowed to get away with this kind of thing. He has had his knees cut off with respect to Kimberly-Clark. When he was in opposition, he was up every day with respect to what is going on in the Niagara River. Now that he is the minister in a position to do something, we have a minister who is unable to inform this House of what is going on with respect to the poisoning of one of the major international waterways between Ontario and New York state.

When New York state officials have said there is no question that this dump is contributing to the deterioration of the Niagara River and the lawyer for the New York Attorney General has said, “The Love Canal sewers are not as bad as this, in terms of the mountains of chemicals”—and that is a direct quote from Mr. Washington, who is the

lawyer for the New York Attorney General—can the minister explain why he has made no statement in this House with respect to this source of contamination and with respect to information which he has about how badly poisoned that dump site is and how bad the poisoning of the Niagara River is as a result? Why has he kept those facts from the House? Why has he not made a statement?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I ask the leader of the third party, where has he been in the last while?

Mr. McClellan: You have not been in the House. You have been hiding.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I have. I have been in the House more than the member has and more than his leader has.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: The leader of the third party—

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Will the minister take his seat.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I remind members that interjections are out of order and answering interjections is not in order. If the minister would like to point his finger, maybe he can point it at the Speaker and speak through the Speaker to the member.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: Through you, Mr. Speaker, to my friend the member for York South, who is still my friend: obviously, he has read a poll that says environmental issues are important issues, so every day in the House the leader of the third party is going to get up and ask an environmental question. They are important, and I think he has a genuine concern. I do not want to indicate he does not, because I sincerely believe the member has a concern about that.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Does the minister have a response?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: In answer to his question, I have consistently stated the position of the province on this site and on other sites. As the member knows, we have been criticized for being dogmatic on this issue, for having standards that are too high in this issue and for constantly harping at our American friends. That is criticism I am prepared to sustain. But on a consistent basis, I have commented very strongly to American authorities about this site and other sites and indicated that we feel there should be an

immediate cleanup. I continue to do so and I will continue to do so beyond this day.

Mr. Rae: The minister has an overdose of Walter Mitty disease. He seems to think everybody around here is saying he is too tough. There is nobody in this Legislature, and certainly nobody in our party, who thinks the minister has been too tough. Our concern is that the minister has not stood up—

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I would not say that.

Mr. Speaker: The question is?

Mr. Rae: When testing shows that the storm sewer is contaminated with 115 parts per billion of dioxin near the plant site to 15 parts per billion near the river and the concentrations of chlorobenzenes are more than two per cent of the sediment—23,000 parts per million—can the minister explain why his ministry has yet to release full analyses of sediment samples and spot-tail shiners, which were allegedly done in November 1985? Why has the House not seen that information? Why has the minister been concealing that information from the House? Why has he been wrapping all his work in a maze of helium and in a maze of hot air rather than taking the kind of action that would make a difference to people?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: The leader of the third party is aware that on a very consistent basis, I have drawn this to the attention of our American friends. I have commented in this House; I have commented in public on many occasions; I have said this in Niagara Falls, New York; and I have said this in Buffalo, New York, in Washington and in New York City. On a consistent basis, we have found the information to indicate that the problem that exists on the other side is not satisfactory. That is why I have pressed it in a number of meetings with Hank Williams. I have pressed this in a meeting in Washington with Lee Thomas. My ministry and I have pressed this issue on a consistent basis with a number of officials. For the leader of the third party to suggest that this has not been the case is simply not accurate.

When the leader of the third party talks about the fact that people on his side of the House have never said the Minister of the Environment is too tough, he had better check back with some statements that have been made over the past year.

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TEACHERS' QUALIFICATIONS

Mr. Davis: I have a question for the Minister of Education. The teaching profession has

always striven to attain high standards and high quality of education for students in Ontario. Why would the minister make recommendations today that threaten to undermine the excellent quality of education provided for students in Ontario by allowing teachers to instruct in courses for which they are not qualified? Can the minister explain the ludicrous position his ministry announced this morning?

Hon. Mr. Conway: I thank the honourable member for his interest and for his question. I will offer a response, regretting the lack of attendance in the assembly this afternoon of the member for York Mills (Miss Stephenson) who while Minister of Education began a process of review of regulation 262 some four and half years ago, some reference to which was made in the papers this morning. I want the member to know that what was spoken of in the morning press in no way represents government policy. It represents, rather, efforts to consult with the education community about ways and means in which we might address a number of the concerns that have been identified.

Interjections.

Hon. Mr. Conway: I would not want my friends from Burlington and Scarborough to become too exercised about what is a draft regulation that has been put out, I say to my friend the member for Mississauga South (Mrs. Marland), for consultation. Neither she nor her colleagues should conclude that this in any way represents government policy because it does not represent government policy.

Mr. Davis: The minister, as always, is full of wind. One of the problems, and the minister knows it, is that with regulations—he can put them out all he wants—he is quite capable of changing them any time he wishes and there does not have to be any consultation nor does there have to be any public discussion. However, that is not my question.

More emphasis in education now is being placed on providing qualified guidance teachers to assist young people in making career choices in the selection of subject areas, and where required on providing personal counselling. By the recommendations today, it appears that his actions in effect say, "I know you are deeply concerned about your child selecting the right courses and finding a job when he or she is finished, but I want you to know that I now am going to allow unqualified teachers to help your child make that important decision."

What does the minister say today to parents and students who because of that article will

understand that there now will be unqualified guidance teachers instructing their children in course selections that will affect them for the rest of their lives?

Hon. Mr. Conway: As I look at and listen to the member and think about the preamble to his supplementary, given the choice, I would rather be full of wind.

I want to say to the parents and to others that this is not government policy. This is but a draft regulation that tries to produce, and I think will effectively produce, an important and constructive consultation out of which will come a change in government policy, but only after that consultation.

In conclusion, as the very distinguished former chairman of the Scarborough Board of Education knows from his long and distinguished experience in that responsibility, there are thousands of letters of permission that authorize teachers to instruct in areas for which they do not have the required qualifications. As we move forward, I am sure the consultations will elicit from the member the kind of advice that will help us resolve this interesting situation.

NORTHERN HEALTH SERVICES

Mr. Wildman: I wonder whether the draught was caused by the wind.

I have a question to the Minister of Health. Will he confirm that the locums the ministry has going to Elliot Lake to provide anaesthetic services are not available every day of the week and that if an emergency occurs on a day when they are not present in Elliot Lake, patients have to be transferred a great distance, probably to Sudbury or Sault Ste. Marie, for an emergency operation?

If that is the case, can he also confirm that the locum system does not deal with the question of providing full-time anaesthetist services in Elliot Lake and that the underserved areas program has not been successful in doing that?

Hon. Mr. Elston: I cannot confirm what the member says, only because I have not heard that suggested. I will look into the circumstances and see whether locums are there on a daily basis. I will then get back to the member.

With respect to the other question, it is my understanding that there are people interested in establishing practices in Elliot Lake. From that standpoint, our underserved areas program is continuing with the recruitment process in assisting the people at the hospital to accomplish a full-time residence in the community by people trained to deliver anaesthetics.

Mr. Wildman: Can the minister indicate to us how many medical positions, for both specialists and general practitioners, are vacant in communities in the north that are under the underserved areas program?

Considering that is a considerable number, will the minister follow the lead of New Brunswick? That province has established a program for medical students to attract them back for summer employment to medical institutions, so they can develop some sort of relationship with those medical institutions in those communities as a way of encouraging them to set up practice in those communities when they graduate.

Will the minister consider that in relation to the proposed program announced by his colleague the Minister for Skills Development (Mr. Sorbara) for northern student employment?

Hon. Mr. Elston: The suggestion which has been made by the member about attracting students via the bursary program has been made by a number of his colleagues from northern Ontario with respect to some programs. Last year, I believe at estimates, the same suggestion was made by the member for Lake Nipigon (Mr. Pouliot) and a couple of his colleagues.

I do not have an exact number of placements which are being requested. I do know a very active group of people from northern Ontario underserved-area communities was here in southern Ontario in late October for a week. They pursued a number of leads with respect to people who would be interested in attending and setting up practice in northern Ontario. The rate of success of that, I understand, has been very encouraging.

There will probably be further decisions to be made very shortly by individuals who have recently graduated from some of the programs. I expect we will be able to assist the community in Elliot Lake, for instance, with some of its difficulties, if the leads continue to be as promising as they already are.

LEGAL AID

Mr. Brandt: My question to the Attorney General, if I can get his attention, concerns the issue of legal aid. Is the minister aware that in connection with the process used for the approval of assistance through legal aid, there has been a directive go out of his ministry indicating that the number of cases that can be processed in the individual areas has been reduced?

Hon. Mr. Scott: I will make inquiries about that. I find it difficult to understand the point the

member has made. As he undoubtedly knows, legal aid is run on behalf of the public by the legal aid committee of the Law Society of Upper Canada. Any determinations about the way it should be delivered, apart from the statutory and regulatory framework, are determinations that are made by the Law Society of Upper Canada. However, I will undertake to look into the matter and report to the honourable member.

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Mr. Brandt: The Attorney General is aware that the funding for legal aid comes from his ministry, and if the number of cases is going to be reduced, that funding will be reduced as well. My understanding is that the process being used at the moment for approval of these particular cases has resulted in fewer cases being approved. The end result of that means fewer dollars will be provided by his ministry to pay for that service. Therefore, it does have an impact on the Ministry of the Attorney General. I would appreciate his looking into the matter to determine whether this is happening.

Hon. Mr. Scott: I will do so, as I said. As the member perhaps also knows, the requisition for funds comes on a certificate from the legal aid committee of the Law Society of Upper Canada, which simply recites the amount it has contracted to spend over the preceding quarter and invites a cheque from the Treasurer to cover that sum. Therefore, the decision about what services will be provided and to which cases will be made in the first instance by the Law Society of Upper Canada.

TEACHERS' QUALIFICATIONS

Mr. Allen: I would like to return to the question of the deregulation of teachers' qualifications with the Minister of Education. The minister suggested in his response to the member for Scarborough Centre (Mr. Davis) that this was not some ministry policy. Of course, it is not, but it is a proposal and apparently a serious one. The minister, as he has confessed to us, is taking a Tory initiative and bothering the boards of the province with it, but he is apparently trying to distance himself from it at the same time, as he has spoken in this House.

Can he tell us what possible attraction a policy of deregulation of teacher qualifications can have for him and what possible evidence he can give us that the deregulation of teacher qualifications to any significant degree would do anything but undermine the quality of education in this province?

Hon. Mr. Conway: It is important for me to try again to help my honourable friends opposite understand the process.

Mr. McClellan: Yes, please.

Mr. Davis: Teachers love it.

Hon. Mr. Conway: I have a clear understanding, and after the weekend, I have a very clear vision of the future.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Response.

Hon. Mr. Conway: I am trying, Mr. Speaker. From time to time, we in the Ministry of Education, recognizing that a whole host of regulations flow from the Education Act, try to ensure that we are as contemporary, as relevant, as responsive and as positive as we can be. We have put out a draft regulation that touches on a whole series of questions for consultation and response.

One of the areas that is addressed in the current draft amendment has to do with teacher qualification. I want the honourable member to know this does not represent government policy. We do not work as the old administration worked. We go forward asking for response, and that is what we are seeking to do. On the basis of that consultation, we will take such action as we deem appropriate to meet the current and expected needs.

Mr. Allen: This is astonishing indeed. Is the minister really telling us he is prepared to indulge in process without purpose? Is he telling us—

Mr. Speaker: Is that your question?

Mr. Allen: I am completing that question.

Is he prepared to contemplate through this proposal that there will be teachers without qualification with access not just to two credit courses but to a whole series of credit courses in the fields of business studies, English and French as a second language, classes for the deaf and blind, teaching the trainable retarded? That suggests to me that this is what he is saying. If that is the case, then why is he doing it? Is he caving in to boards that do not wish to retrain or to boards that want to avoid the hiring schedule they are committed to?

Hon. Mr. Conway: Unlike the average democratic socialist, I am not prepared to be indulgent and I am certainly not prepared to indulge in process without purpose.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Mr. Rowe: I have a question of the Minister of Health. In April 1986, the Simcoe County

District Health Council recommended that the government provide the necessary funds to permit the construction of a new hospital in Barrie. In November 1986, a public institution inspection panel, citing crowded hallways, acute storage problems, old and inadequate laundry facilities and a shortage of beds at the Royal Victoria Hospital, also called on this government to provide new funds for a hospital.

Can the minister tell me whether he plans to provide the funds for a new hospital during the 1987-88 fiscal year, or does he intend to treat the residents of Simcoe county as second-class citizens when it comes to health care in this province?

Hon. Mr. Elston: We have more resolve in this party than his obvious predecessors did in theirs. This thing has come to my attention several times at the questioning of this honourable gentleman, who rightfully has raised this question on a couple of occasions. He is impatient with the planning process which we have put in place to look at the facilities and understand in a logical and realistic way the needs of the community of Barrie and accommodate those in thorough planning for that area.

Unlike previous Ministers of Health in this province, I will not announce on a whim, as happened in 1979, that there will be a hospital or, as happened on one occasion in 1983 when a particular person drove through Barrie and happened to stop off at the local radio station, say, "Yes, we will build a hospital," without planning for and understanding what is needed in the area.

We will thoroughly plan and put in place the appropriate services required for the people in Barrie. Like the honourable gentleman, I am very much committed to a first-class health care system for all of the communities right across Ontario. Whether it be Atikokan, St. Catharines, Elliot Lake or whatever, we will expand the opportunities of the people of the province to receive first-class health care.

Mr. Rowe: As evidenced by the minister's firm commitment and flabbergab in this House, I might say that in 1986 he established a new detox centre behind our antiquated Royal Victoria Hospital in Barrie to help Simcoe county combat one of the highest drug and alcohol abuse rates in this province; but he has flatly refused to provide the necessary funds to permit the establishment of the much-needed follow-up care and long-term treatment. If the minister does not want to help them build a new hospital in Barrie, why

does he not at least provide the funds to permit the detox centre to carry out its essential service?

Hon. Mr. Elston: The member will probably realize that in terms of planning for health care needs we use the resources and facilities of the district health council to help us plan what is required and what should be ranked in priority.

We have made an incursion into the provision of better service for those with alcohol and drug addictions province-wide. It may have been that the member's facility was unfortunately not one of the programs which received funding this past year, but that does not mean in any way we are not committed to the very valuable work done at the community level by alcohol and drug addiction program providers.

We are examining any number of options in terms of the programs that are available province-wide, or community-wide in the Simcoe area, and we must then weigh those competing interests and fund those which appear to have the best chance of providing increased service, in some cases to areas where there was no service before. We can only hope to increase service in those areas where there was some lack of attention in years gone by.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr. Swart: I have a question for the Minister of Financial Institutions. I want to refer back to the answer he gave to a question last Wednesday in which he attempted to discredit the financial situation with regard to the Manitoba public insurance system. In this regard, I have sent him a letter from the minister in Manitoba.

I wonder whether the minister noted on page 2 the profit and loss year by year for the Manitoba auto insurance plan. Including last year, it shows profits in 11 years and losses in four. The total profits are now \$54 million, including this year. There is \$321 million in reserve investments against unpaid claims.

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In posing my question, I want to use the exact scenario and phraseology used by the minister last Wednesday in translating his \$10-million loss in Manitoba last year to a \$100-million loss in Ontario if we had the same system. Is it not true that if Ontario had a system such as Manitoba's for the same number of years, the people of Ontario would have total surpluses of \$540 million and reserves in investments of \$3.21 billion?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I am pleased the member for Welland-Thorold asked that question, because it gives me an opportunity to respond

further to the question of his leader, to which I responded earlier today. On Monday, January 12, the Winnipeg Free Press ran a lead editorial, which said, "Bad News for Motorists."

It talks about the number of dollars that have been lost by the auto plan in Manitoba. As I have said, it states that not only is the shortfall this year going to be \$17 million—that is after investment income and underwriting losses—but they also project at least a \$17-million shortfall next year.

If the member is going to say, "What if we had done that in the past?" the situation we are dealing with now is that he is advocating that we as a government should get into the insurance business. Before we do that and obligate the people of Ontario to a potential cost of \$170 million or more, if we use these figures, we are going to look into it.

We have a group looking at that to make a recommendation to us. If it makes sense, we will certainly look at it, but we are not going to buy the member's pig in a poke just because he thinks it is a great idea.

Mr. Foulds: Who is the group? Is the group from the Winnipeg Free Press?

Mr. Speaker: Does the member for Port Arthur (Mr. Foulds) have a supplementary?

Mr. Swart: I have a supplementary.

Mr. Speaker: I thought the member for Port Arthur had one. The member for Welland-Thorold.

Mr. Swart: It is nice that the minister cannot deny the accuracy of those figures of \$54 million in profit over the term of its operation and \$321 million in reserve.

Apart from the substantially lower rates of profitability of the Ontario plan compared to the Manitoba plan, does not the Manitoba plan commend its application to Ontario for its investment potential in worthy projects? Is the minister aware that of the \$321-million reserve, \$23 million has been invested in 35 capital projects for schools, \$30 million in 75 municipal projects, \$49 million in 100 hospital and health projects and \$172 million in provincial projects such as hydro?

Mr. Speaker: Question.

Mr. Swart: Does the minister not think it would be beneficial to have that \$3.21 billion to invest in those kinds of worthy projects here? Does he not think that would be better than the public not having a single dollar to show for its massive premiums in this province?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The member for Welland-Thorold said I did not dispute the

figures; as a matter of fact, I do. The reserves in Manitoba at present are \$60 million. The member is advocating a system today in which he is saying we should get into the business. In Manitoba right now, the plan is turning into a very expensive drain on the people. Before we as a government subject the people of Ontario to that kind of financial drain, we are going to examine it.

PEEL CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Mr. J. M. Johnson: My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. Will the minister explain to the members of the House why, after assuring me on December 17 that he was willing to meet with the lawyers representing the Charlestown Residential School in Caledon, the chairman of the board and the former principal of the school, along with representatives of the Peel Children's Services, he has now changed his mind and has no interest in doing so?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: My recollection of our discussion is a little different, but I am quite prepared to review that again with the honourable member.

First, I indicated, not only to him but also to the parents themselves, that I would see to it that they had an opportunity on an individual basis to meet with representatives of Peel Children's Services and representatives from my area office to discuss the effectiveness of the programming for their individual children.

The second agreement, as I recall it, was that the ongoing legal situation between Charlestown and Peel with respect to the lease or purchase of the property was just that, a legal situation, and that I would ensure that our legal authorities would clearly define to Charlestown what the situation was.

My recollection is that since the Dunsters are no longer associated with this program in any way, there is no valid reason for me to meet with them. I cannot recall making that commitment. I will discuss it further with my honourable friend.

Mr. J. M. Johnson: In our conversation, I suggested he meet with the chairman of the board and the lawyer representing the board, not just Mr. Dunster. There is a legal clarification necessary, but there is also a problem relating to the residence of children in that facility.

I feel the minister is negligent if he refuses to meet with them to try to clarify this very urgent situation.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I am quite prepared to check once again with legal counsel in my

ministry to find out exactly the current status of the negotiations. If it appears there is a complete breakdown in that, I will review the best way to proceed.

In recent discussions with the parents, I indicated that I was less concerned—not unconcerned—with the legal ramifications of the property than I was with the programming needs of the children, and that my first efforts and energy would be directed to making sure the programming needs of their children were met.

Quite frankly, the legal considerations are a secondary concern to me. I am sure my honourable friend would agree that is the priority they should have.

ARGOSY FINANCIAL GROUP OF CANADA

Mr. Philip: I have a question of the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations concerning his abominable response to the Ombudsman's report on Argosy, a matter the Ombudsman has called "one of the largest frauds in Ontario history."

The Ombudsman's report clearly demonstrates that the regulatory actions of the government were wrong and unreasonable and that a majority of the people who lost their money were over 60 years of age, many of them were forced to come out of retirement and start working again at that age and many of them were forced to move in with their children as a result of the financial hardship of losing their life savings. Why has the minister decided to turn his back on these people and refused to accept the report of the Ombudsman of Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I agree with the member that the fraud was one of the most abominable in the history of the province. Where we part company and where I do not agree is that there was regulatory failure.

The Ombudsman in his report could not pinpoint the specific regulatory failure. As a matter of fact, he arbitrarily found only 50 per cent regulatory failure—whatever that means—and then went on to state that it had been over a period of years. As a result of outside legal consultation, we cannot find any regulatory failure. If we were in any way to contribute government funds to resolve this problem, we would set a very dangerous precedent. We would be in a position whereby we would set a standard of expectation that anybody who invested anything in Ontario and it went bad would have recourse to the government. As a minister responsible to the people of Ontario, I have an obligation to make sure that the funds which are

raised from the people of Ontario are used expeditiously and with great care. As a result of that, I have rejected the Ombudsman's claim.

1510

Mr. Philip: I have a question arising from the minister's obvious intent that somehow it is the investors' fault for investing and let the buyer beware. Does the minister not understand that the Ombudsman has tabled documents and has clearly documented in his report that the registrar of mortgage brokers failed abominably, that he knew the principals were people who should not be in the business and yet he did nothing to get them out of the business, that he did not communicate that to the Ontario Securities Commission and that had the Ontario Securities Commission been aware of the information in the other branch of the ministry, this would not have gone on?

Is the minister taking a position which is clearly outlined in the Liberal research paper which says, "One very sad aspect of the Argosy fiasco is the amount of misunderstanding that exists among the media and the general public." It goes on to say, "It is really shameful that the Tories should be so manipulative and so dishonest in spreading that kind of information to the public about the investors." How does the government's position differ from the position taken by the Tories, whom the Liberal Party so greatly condemned in this research paper turned out in 1971 by its research department?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I am sure all members of the House will appreciate I am in a rather unique situation in that I have the opportunity to take a look at this situation and say: "A pox on your house. The former government is at fault and we are going to find that it was at fault." That would be the easiest and the most politically expedient thing to do.

Notwithstanding that, I have had to look at the situation. I have had to get independent advice. I have had to look at it objectively in the best interests of the broad majority of the people of Ontario. As a result of that investigation, I and my colleagues have determined that we are not prepared to compensate those people.

POLICE PURSUITS

Mr. Sterling: I have a question of the Solicitor General. When is the Solicitor General going to take some action on police chases in Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Keyes: We answered that in our estimates last week, but for the purpose of the House I will mention that tomorrow I will be reviewing a final cabinet submission on the issue

of police pursuits which will then proceed through the cabinet committee on justice. I hope it will be out very shortly. It has been redrafted a number of times and is at the stage that I will be receiving it tomorrow.

Mr. Sterling: Study, study, study: that is what we have heard for some time. There are approximately 150 police forces in Ontario and we have 150 different policies on police chases in Ontario. Two years ago, a special committee presented the minister with a report on police pursuits. Since the minister has been Solicitor General for a year and a half, he has done nothing to date. Why does the minister not at least implement one or two of the 31 recommendations in this report and do it now? Quit studying; let us get on with it.

Hon. Mr. Keyes: I have implemented some of those recommendations in a quiet way. In a process of determining what is the most effective type of policy with police pursuits, we have done a fair amount. We have had very wide consultation with the Police Association of Ontario, the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police, the municipal policing authorities and members of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario to come up with a comprehensive set of guidelines which are acceptable to the public and will be effective.

DAY CARE

Ms. Gigantes: My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. Following the report released last week by the day care coalition concerning the quality of day care in Canada and the survey by day care inspectors which indicated that fully 25 per cent of those private profit-operated day cares were either poor or very poor in terms of the quality of program provided, how can the minister justify the proposal to provide public funding in a direct grant to private profit-operated day care centres in Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I had an opportunity to meet with the day care coalition on Tuesday morning before that report was publicly released. At that time, they indicated to me that they were going to say that 38 per cent of the growth in the system in the past year was in the commercial area. I told them their figures were wrong, but they released it anyway. The actual figure for growth in the past year was seven per cent in the nonprofit area and four per cent in the commercial area.

Ms. Gigantes: That is irrelevant. It is not what I asked you.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: That is the reality. Those are the real figures.

The second point of the member's question was with respect to the percentage. What they neglected to point out was that in that report it clearly says that while there are more problems in the commercial sector, the main reason is that they get fewer resources and the response is not to abandon them but to improve the resources available to them. That was not made public.

PETITION

PROPERTY ASSESSMENT

Mr. McFadden: I have a petition here, signed by 49 residents of Ontario, addressed to the Legislature and to the government as follows:

"We, the undersigned, are opposed to the imposition of market value assessment on Metro Toronto by the provincial government. The higher property taxes for many north Toronto home owners, as a result of market value assessment, would impose a tremendous financial hardship for many individuals, particularly those on fixed incomes, single-parent families, seniors and low-income workers.

"The people of Ontario are already paying too much in taxes. The increases in property taxes under market value assessment, caused by escalating land prices in Metro Toronto, would not result in a corresponding increase in municipal services. The imposition of market value assessment on Metro Toronto by the provincial government will not only cause financial hardship for many people, but will also have a destabilizing effect on neighbourhoods and families in north Toronto. We urge the provincial government not to impose market value assessment on Metro Toronto home owners."

MOTION

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved that Bill 52, An Act to amend the Health Protection and Promotion Act, 1983, be transferred from the select committee on health to the standing committee on social development.

Motion agreed to.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THIRD READING

The following bill was given third reading on motion:

Bill 165, An Act to amend the Child and Family Services Act, 1984 and certain other Acts in relation to Adoption Disclosure.

Motion agreed to.

1520

House in committee of supply.

ESTIMATES, MINISTRY OF HOUSING (continued)

On vote 1904, community housing program; item 1, program administration:

Mr. McClellan: I have some concerns to raise with the minister on this vote and item. I will wait until his officials have ensconced themselves, if they are going to ensconce. I am sure the minister feels more confident now; I certainly feel more confident now.

I have a matter that is causing me a great deal of concern. It has to do with the proposed rent increase for a nonprofit senior citizens' apartment building at 707 St. Clair Avenue West, St. Matthew's Bracondale House. The minister will be aware, because we have raised it since he became minister, that Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp. sets rents on the basis of what it calls low-end-of-market surveys for the nonprofit programs under subsection 56(1). The so-called low-end-of-market surveys are not conducted in the neighbourhood of the apartment building; they are conducted wherever the whims of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp. seem to take them.

In this case, the low-end-of-market survey was not conducted in centre west-end Toronto, which is a reasonably low-rent area, and it was not conducted among older buildings or rent-controlled buildings; it was conducted among decontrolled buildings in the following areas. This is supposed to be a neighbourhood survey. The neighbourhood I am talking about is St. Clair and Christie in the city of Toronto. The buildings surveyed were 2350 Dundas Street West and 2360 Dundas Street West—I have no idea how far west that is; I am sure it is on the other side of Islington Avenue—1750 Lawrence Avenue West, 15 Martha Eaton Way and 250 St. George Street. These are new commercial buildings, far away from centre west-end Toronto; so it is no big surprise that Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp. discovered that according to the low-end-of-market survey, the rents at St. Matthew's Bracondale House should go up. They are proposing to bring the rents from their present levels to what they call the low-end-of-market level by 1988.

We are finally getting to the nub of my concern. Rents are proposed to rise as follows: from a current rent for a bachelor apartment of

\$325 a month to a proposed rent of \$390 a month; from \$389 to \$525 a month for a one-bedroom apartment, an increase of \$136; from \$441 to \$645 a month for a two-bedroom apartment; and from \$562 to \$735 a month for a three-bedroom apartment.

I have a series of questions I would like to pursue with the minister. First, how are people on fixed incomes, who went into this building in 1981 on the understanding that the rent schedule was something they could afford on fixed incomes, supposed to pay increases of 20 to 25 per cent based on current market conditions? Where are they supposed to get the extra money to pay for these massive increases in a supposedly nonprofit program? Can the minister explain why his officials have gone along with this to the extent that they refuse to increase the number of subsidy spaces at Bracondale House until it agrees to accept this new rent schedule? Can he explain why this is happening?

Hon. Mr. Curling: When the honourable member from the third party raises a question, it is always well thought out and of great concern to his constituents. I do not know whether this specific one is in his constituency, but when the member rises it is usually with a well thought out question.

This is a problem about which we are very concerned. I should tell the member at the outset that it is a Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp. project, and he has said it is a CMHC project. We do not play a role in rent-setting there. He mentioned the low-end-of-market type of assessment and he mentioned it does not help people very much who have these drastic increases. He used one example of an increase from \$389 to maybe \$525. That is quite an increase for anyone on a fixed income.

CMHC speaks to my staff constantly and I am in consultation with it, but it also realizes this is a very complex problem for it to solve. It is not complex in a way that it moves a \$150 or so increase and the individual does not have the money. CMHC wants to resolve the problem these people are faced with in terms of how they should go about it. We are trying to assist CHMC. We hope it will resolve the problem as early as possible and therefore not deplete that kind of fixed income, most of it going into rent.

I do not have any specific solutions to offer my friend as to how this will be resolved. I have stated already that this is a CMHC problem and that I am quite concerned that these people are faced with an exorbitant increase in rent. That is the most I can offer my friend on this matter.

Mr. McClellan: I cannot accept that as a response. I accept the minister's statement of concern, but we are going to have to pursue this a little because he obviously does not understand the involvement of his own ministry in this matter.

I state again that his ministry has refused to increase the number of subsidy spaces at Bracondale House until it adopts the CHMC low-end-of-market rent scale that I outlined to him and which he indicated was unacceptable. Specifically, under the existing formula Bracondale House would be entitled to 64 subsidy spaces in the project. It has only 55 spaces now and it has asked for additional spaces from the ministry. The ministry has refused to give these, as I understand it, until it adopts the new rent schedule, so the minister is involved in this.

1530

So that the minister understands what a terrible situation we have, Bracondale House did a survey of the tenants' incomes in October 1986 and discovered there are a number of tenants who should be getting subsidies already who do not get subsidies; they are paying full rent.

Two tenants whose incomes are below \$8,000 a year are paying full rent without subsidy. Three tenants whose incomes are below \$9,000 a year, who should be getting subsidies, are paying full rent. There is one tenant whose income is below \$10,000. Six tenants whose incomes are below \$11,000 are paying full rent with no subsidy. Eight tenants whose incomes are below \$12,000 are paying full rent with no subsidies. There are seven tenants below \$13,000, five tenants below \$14,000 and three tenants below \$15,000. Clearly, there are a number of tenants in that building who already should be subsidized but who are paying full rent because of a shortage of subsidy spaces.

The ministry and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp. are now proposing to raise the rent schedule to what I can only say is a thoroughly bogus low-end-of-market scale. Apparently, the ministry has been unwilling or unable to recognize the extent of the problem, even to the extent of providing additional subsidy spaces.

There are going to be some real hardships in this building and in other buildings if this is the practice across Metropolitan Toronto. A number of seniors are going to be in a terrible situation. The rents are going up on the basis of market value, and the ministry is not providing sufficient subsidy spaces so that each and every person who

would be eligible for a subsidy would be able to get one.

There is another piece of information I want to share with the minister, and then I will have made my presentation to him. The irony of this whole thing is that when CMHC raises the rents to a new market level, I ask members to guess who benefits. None of this money goes to the federal government, as I understand it. All of this money comes back to the government of Ontario and to the Minister of Housing because, under the terms of the agreement, surplus funds at the end of the year are returned to the Ontario community housing assistance program. Right?

Here are the figures. In the first year, the OCHAP subsidy will increase because the rents are going up. During the first year of the proposed rent increase, OCHAP subsidies will increase from \$120,000 to \$147,000 a year. At the end of the year, there will be a surplus of \$80,000 in the account of St. Matthew's Bracondale House. That money will be returned to OCHAP, to the Ontario government and to the Minister of Housing. The profit of the first year of the rent increase will go back to the Minister of Housing.

For the second year the OCHAP subsidy will increase to \$183,000. The surplus at the end of the year from the higher rents will increase to \$133,000. This too will go into the minister's pocket on behalf of the taxpayers of Ontario.

In year three, the OCHAP subsidy increases to \$220,000. Because of the increased rents, the surplus in the third year increases to \$200,000. The net effect over the course of the three years is to reduce the government of Ontario's cost to something in the order of \$20,000, which is the difference between \$220,000 and \$200,000, as compared with the difference now of \$120,000 to \$80,000. This is really crazy.

I ask the minister, first, to sit down with his assistant deputy minister, Mr. Pitura, and with Mr. Cornell and review commitments that were made during the estimates of the Ministry of Housing to try to do something about these CMHC low-end-of-market surveys, which are imposing a highly inflationary rental housing market on pensioners on fixed incomes in nonprofit apartment buildings.

It is a crazy, crazy situation. The minister cannot allow the spiral that has taken place in uncontrolled commercial rental accommodation to be the basis for setting rents for people on fixed incomes. He cannot do it; it is lunacy. He is causing an incredible amount of anxiety and real financial harm to senior citizens who believed

that when they entered a senior citizens' building under the auspices of our federal and provincial programs, they had an assurance that for the rest of their lives the rent problem at least would be solved, they would be saved from the terrible spiral that drove them out of the commercial rental market in the first place and they would never be subjected again to these kinds of financial insecurities.

Yet, lo and behold, agencies of the government, with bureaucracies that appear to be completely insensitive, are imposing market values on people with fixed incomes. People who have been in these buildings since 1981 have not had any big increases. Maybe the minister can remember a 25 per cent increase in the old age pension; I cannot remember that. I do not remember a big increase in Canada pension benefits, because it did not take place. People do not have the money to pay for these kinds of increases. The minister does not have enough subsidy spaces to cushion everybody from these kinds of increases. He does not have enough subsidy spaces now to cover all the people who are eligible for subsidy. The October survey proved that.

There are more people who are now eligible for subsidy than get subsidy. The ministry is already short about 10 spaces, and when these rent increases go through, virtually everybody in the building will be entitled to the subsidy. Does the minister not think it would be a lot more sensible to roll the increase back, accept what St. Matthew's has suggested, which is an inflation increase of six per cent, which is matched by what people can expect to get in their pension income, and roll this thing back before it causes the minister, and more especially the people who live in St. Matthew's, a great deal of harm?

I would like the minister, first, to stand and indicate how he can sit down with CMHC to roll back these increases; and second, to address himself to the number of subsidy spaces.

Hon. Mr. Curling: I will state, first, that I will not instruct CMHC to roll back the increase. Let me make that very clear at this time.

Like anything else, some policy changes have repercussions. The increases the tenants are experiencing—yes, I have thought of this—have, as the member has so eloquently stated, brought some hardship on those tenants. As he knows, under the Ontario community housing assistance program, as I understand it, only 50 per cent of those units can be supplemented. The member has also spoken in detail about some tenants who, after being assessed, found they needed supple-

ments or subsidies, who found themselves in hardship and required some subsidy to keep them from paying more than 30 per cent of their income in rent.

1540

That is the problem CMHC and we find ourselves in with regard to the tenants in those apartments.

The member also mentioned—and I will come back and address the three points—that the surplus that is found there goes back to OCHAP. I understand that any surplus in any program does not go back to a program specifically but goes back to the main coffers. Maybe that is why my honourable friend left, because I would then turn around to ask him for that surplus.

The point the member makes is that, after putting the program into place and realizing there is a surplus and there is a hardship on the tenants who are being tested in paying their rent increases, there is no program designed to assist them. I have said that the maximum number of units that can be rent-supplemented under OCHAP is 50 per cent.

The member asked what I was going to do about that specific case. I think we can sit down as our part of the government with CHMC to work out a way to supplement the rents of those who have been identified as requiring assistance because of those increases. I do not know the process in detail, but we can use some of the money we now have to assist those tenants. I want the member to understand that it is also a CMHC problem because it is its program. I am sure that can be worked out. The staff will be working on it. Even today I gather they were speaking to CMHC on this project.

I am sure we can resolve the problem in that way and make sure the bureaucracy does not get in the way while people are suffering.

Mr. McClellan: I appreciate what the minister has said. I take it the minister is indicating that it may be possible to find more than the maximum number of subsidized units if the need indicates. I wonder whether the minister could be clear. I would like to have an assurance from the minister—and I do not think it is unfair or unrealistic to ask for this—that anybody who lives in this building who is eligible for subsidization will be able to obtain subsidization because of what is happening here; and that the minister will take whatever action is necessary to get those extra subsidy spaces into this building.

I agree with him that the main problem is the approach of CMHC, which is the most difficult and insufferable bureaucracy I have ever encoun-

tered in my life. I do not understand how the federal government can allow a bureaucracy to be such a law unto itself with no accountability. There is not a minister whom one can point to who has the kind of accountability and responsibility for this agency that we take for granted with respect to our public service and our ministries here. There is nothing like it in the Ontario public service. It is an insult to the people of this country that CMHC is able to trample on people the way it does with no accountabilities and no consequences.

I appreciate that the minister is just one more person who has enormous difficulty dealing with this particular federal bureaucracy, but I plead again with the ministry to try to negotiate with these characters to get them to stop using the current market inflation and the inflationary spiral in commercial rents as the basis for setting rent in our nonprofit housing program because it is going to destroy the program if rents are tied to the kind of crazy inflationary spiral that exists in communities such as Metropolitan Toronto and some of the other large cities in this province. It will destroy the program. The minister cannot come up with enough subsidy money if the program is tied to a rent-setting policy based on this kind of inflation.

To get back to my main point, which is the minister's responsibility, can I have an assurance that all those who are eligible for subsidy will have the opportunity to apply for and receive subsidies?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I can give the honourable member my assurance about the policy aspect of it, to look at the policy and to make sure it does not deprive anyone of those supplements, but I cannot give him my assurance that they will receive the increased supplements for their rent. This is something I am trying to work out with CMHC. Again, the member has identified a rather complex bureaucracy, a bureaucracy that one has to understand, and I am trying to understand it.

I would like to stand here and give the member my assurance that his people will receive the increased amount of money for their rent, but I cannot do that. I gather from the staff that they met with CMHC as recently as today in working on this complex problem and the hardship these people face. We will have to look at the criteria once again, going back to the policy, and see that we come to a reasonable solution so that we will not have to face this in our estimates or in the future.

Mr. McClellan: I have one more final comment. The person whose total income is \$7,611.63 this past year is now paying \$389 a month rent with no subsidy and CMHC is proposing to jack that up to \$525 over the course of these staged increases. I can go through the list I have here and I can go through the incomes. Here is somebody with a total income of \$8,891.95 now paying \$389 a month. CMHC is going to be asking for \$525 from this person.

I just say to the minister that this train is coming towards his desk. If he thinks somebody with that kind of an income can pay \$6,000 a year in rent—which leaves a grand total of \$2,000 for all other necessary expenses—and there will not be a community outcry about this, then the minister lives in a different community to the one I do. I think the minister realizes how offensive, how insulting, how outrageous what CMHC is doing really is, notwithstanding that CMHC is probably such a law unto itself that it will simply proceed to do this. As I said, the train is heading for the minister's desk and the people whose incomes are going to be decimated to pay the rent are going to be coming to him for assistance.

I appreciate the commitment the minister has given. He is obviously being very cautious. I will be knocking on the door of Mr. Pitura, who is listening attentively, and other officials of the ministry because I think we need to work this out and we need to work it out very quickly before anybody really suffers the kind of damage that is inevitable unless some emergency action is taken.

1550

Mr. Villeneuve: I will express a few concerns regarding community housing and vote 1904 of the ministry. They have to do with some of the great things the minister has told us have happened in the past 18 months.

One of the not-so-great things is that with the changes that have occurred, particularly in municipal nonprofit senior citizens' housing in the past 18 months, it is almost guaranteed that small, rural Ontario municipalities and towns will no longer be eligible for municipal nonprofit housing through the ministry.

Senior citizens living in these small towns find the burden of home ownership somewhat heavy after a certain time, particularly when one of the spouses has passed away. The fact that the ministry has decreed that a 40 per cent needs criterion must be met to satisfy the construction of municipal nonprofit accommodation for senior citizens has almost guaranteed that very few

of our small towns qualify. I will cite a few examples.

Senior citizens, be they couples or single individuals, may have modest investment incomes and also would probably have residences in the value range of \$25,000 to \$40,000. The liquidation of these residences would disqualify them immediately, because the interest income earned on those investments would effectively say they no longer meet the core needs criteria as set out by the ministry.

The village of Avonmore in the municipality in which I live currently has under construction a municipal nonprofit senior citizens' home. The only reason it is currently under construction is that it qualified under the former government's criteria. The changes this government has initiated would have disqualified this community.

It is similar in the village of Lancaster. Under the previous administration, it was granted funds to set up its municipal nonprofit housing corporation; which was done, all criteria were met. The rules of the game were changed, and we now have no allocation for the village of Lancaster. These people met every criteria at the time. They now have a corporation, which obtained funding from the previous government, that has no senior citizens' residence being constructed and no allocation.

In the village of Crysler, we have the same situation; likewise, in the village of Chesterville. These are all situations in small, rural Ontario towns. Unless the minister addresses the needs criteria, he has effectively told these people that they do not and will not qualify.

First, does the minister intend to make any changes in his core needs criteria to accommodate to some degree these senior citizens, who have never asked anyone to hand out any money? Basically, they have done it on their own by living carefully and frugally. They now find that owning a home is difficult, if not almost impossible. They do not qualify. We do not have any senior citizens' accommodations to which they can move. Effectively, they are stuck in having either to move to a community that is foreign to them or to make drastic changes in their lives. I do not think it is fair, and I await the minister's reply.

Hon. Mr. Curling: I want to respond to my friend the member for Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry. As I said, all these ridings sound like law firms.

I understand what the member is saying. When the 40 per cent guideline was put in place, it was

done so we could target the neediest in those areas. The member made another point, that in some of the areas it may be extremely difficult to find 40 per cent of the project to make up the core need.

I want to go back to the member's question about what we are doing about seniors. In our last total allocation we had 1,515 seniors approved. That is quite an achievement in such a short time. Again, I am not patting myself on the back. It is a dramatic increase in addressing the needs of seniors across Ontario. In the eastern area alone, 125 units in projects for seniors were addressed through the core need; 79 were in the rental market category.

Our program has looked at those who are in the most need. We would like to have a tremendous number of allocations and units to take in others who are not as greatly deprived as those whom we are now addressing. We are looking at other areas, such as the member's, which may not be able to fill those projects with 40 per cent. There are areas that cannot meet that percentage. They still make a presentation to us and the staff will look at it. For my approval I take those things into consideration.

Mr. Villeneuve: Where are these 1,500 senior citizens' units that the minister approved during 1986? Are they primarily in the city and urban areas? I would like to know the breakdown. How many of those were allocated to small rural Ontario towns?

The minister should remember that at present, most of these people live in their own modest homes. Some of them are living in apartments. If municipal nonprofit seniors' housing goes to their town, they will probably liquidate their residence to a young couple who would be looking at that home as a startup home. If it is an apartment, someone would be renting that apartment.

Effectively, some housing accommodation is being created. You would also be helping these small towns, which have a tendency to lose population instead of increasing it at present. Not only would you be stimulating construction on a short-term basis, but you would also be bringing some young blood to some of these communities. I feel that is very important.

I would also like to remind the minister and emphasize that in these small communities, these senior citizens have no place to go when the burden of home ownership is beyond what they feel they can handle comfortably. They have to move to urban areas. It is a sad situation, when they have earned their living and lived in these

small towns, that they are forced to pull up roots and go to an area they are unfamiliar with. They probably create a problem in the urban area when they could have continued to live in the milieu which was theirs all their life. Could the minister please address that?

1600

Hon. Mr. Curling: I remind the honourable member that he asked whether I could name all these areas. The point he made that seniors would like to stay in their own communities has been expressed right across Ontario. After living for 30, 40, 50 or 60 years in a community, no one wants to move out and live somewhere that is unfamiliar, where the person would have to be reoriented all over again. The program addresses that need.

Most of the programs for seniors are in small communities. The member asked me to name all the small communities in which senior citizen projects have been allocated. I will not go through them in detail. That would take us the rest of the estimates time, and there are a lot of pertinent questions other people would like to ask in that respect.

I will tell the member where some of the projects are in the eastern area. In Cornwall, we have a project of 40 units; in Gloucester, the eastern Ontario nonprofit group has another project of 50 units; in Kingston, there is another project of 50 units, as a matter of fact 25 market and 25 core; in Ottawa, there is a project of 64 units; and in Trenton there is another project of 50 units. They are located in areas—I do not know whether the member wants the specific towns—that show a need by seniors.

It is an agreement between the federal government—Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp.—and ourselves that we target and have 40 per cent for those in need, so while we are trying to meet the guidelines and criteria of CMHC, we are also sensitive to the points the member made about the times communities cannot find the 40 per cent for those in need.

A member of the third party stated that sometimes it had been difficult to work out policies with other parties. He stated that CMHC has criteria, that we have criteria and that we work out an agreement. We agree with CMHC that we must target mostly those in need. Again, back to the point that there are areas which cannot reach that percentage, we are prepared to look specifically at those cases.

Mr. Villeneuve: With regard to the towns the minister mentioned, Cornwall has a population of 46,000 or 47,000, greater Kingston has a

population of well over 100,000 and Gloucester is a suburb of Ottawa. The minister is talking about urban Ontario, as I see it. I express the deep concerns of small-town Ontario. In the area I represent, my metropolis is a town called Alexandria, which has slightly more than 3,000 people. We are getting into small-town Ontario. It is most important that these senior citizens not be classed as second-class citizens because they happen to live in some of these very much smaller communities.

Again, I go back to the Lancaster situation. The minister's staff has been most helpful. We met with representatives of the municipal non-profit seniors' organization in Lancaster a week ago. We had two of the minister's staff members down from Ottawa, two very capable people, but they were handcuffed by this 40 per cent criterion. These people were allocated amounts of money to do the study, the analysis, to establish the need; that money was spent. The needs were established under the old criteria. We now have a situation where under the new criteria this has to be pretty well done over again. Their funds have run out, a most embarrassing situation, because the rules of the game were changed in midstream.

Will these communities have special consideration in the ministry's allocations for 1987?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I named a few small towns, and as I said, I could spend all afternoon naming small towns. It is so unfair that the member stated the towns I named were not small enough.

The point I should make—and I would like to make it emphatically—is that none of these programs would have existed if the province had not partaken in them. No program in Fort Boyle, which has 20 units, would have existed. Tillsonburg has 40 units; Tobermory, 14 and 50, a total of 64.

We look after all of Ontario. I am the Minister of Housing for all of Ontario. I could go on all day about the small towns—I would rather call them intimate towns—and how we address their needs. Again, we are tied into an agreement with Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp. and the idea is to target those most in need.

To address the other part of this, we did not change policy in midstream. The criteria were there before, as I understand it. It is quite possible that groups started to plan their projects years ago with different criteria. Then when the criteria were changed one or two years ago, they would have had to change their emphasis as to

who would be accommodated in these projects. I would not say it was changed in midstream.

The last point I would like to make is that there are other projects that address the needs of seniors, not only municipal nonprofit ones. There are other projects. When I name all this and the member says there are only 50 here or only 20 here, those are the municipal nonprofit ones; there are other projects for seniors in some of those areas.

Mr. Villeneuve: Not many years ago, under a previous administration, the community of Williamsburg had a 32-unit senior citizens' apartment building. That community certainly has fewer than 500 people. A municipal nonprofit seniors' residence has just been completed in the community of Winchester; the community of Winchester has about 2,000 people and there are 45 units there. The community of Finch, which has about 500 people, completed a senior citizens' project in 1986. The community of Avonmore, which has somewhere between 300 and 400 people, is in the process of completing a municipal nonprofit seniors' residence. I remind the minister that this was under a previous administration.

The town of Lancaster did indeed get caught with a change of rules and regulations in midstream. The town of Crysler was caught in the same situation, as was the town of Chesterville. These three small communities in my riding were caught in a situation where they qualified the previous month and the rules were changed. That is all I can tell the minister. That is what I have been told by people in his ministry. I was quite close to the scene in all this. It did make them ineligible and that is of grave concern to me.

Hon. Mr. Curling: Of course the rules were changed, but the member should remember who changed the rules. Our federal counterpart changed the rules and we are going along with it. It is not that just we changed the rules. As I said, we agree that we must target those most in need.

I must remind the member that he asked me a direct question about municipal nonprofit and then started to speak about how many units were done by the previous government. I could stand here and defend our record, with the tremendous number of projects we have put on stream since we have been here, but I know the member's question came from concern and not from competition. I have stood in the House many times and spoken about the number of units approved so far. We continue to approve them. We continue to look at those needs.

I had hoped I could address all the needs so that today the member could stand in the committee and say not only that 95 per cent of the program is good and that he is concerned about five per cent but also that 100 per cent of our housing initiatives are good.

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Mr. Villeneuve: I will not belabour the point, but there is a minister within the government who is in charge of senior citizens' affairs. I have expressed my concerns to him and to Ivy St. Lawrence, chairman of the Ontario Advisory Council on Senior Citizens. I believe they, in concert with the ministry, are attempting to rectify some of the inequities.

We must remember that the vast majority of our senior citizens has never asked for any handouts. They are not asking for handouts now. They are simply asking that the burden of home ownership, which they find rather heavy after they get to a certain age, the looking after the grass, the snow, the maintenance—they would like to be able to stay in the community where they have lived the majority of their lives and have a residence. It would not matter if it were privately owned, so be it, but they want to have a place where the burden of ownership and all the things that go with it can be lifted from their shoulders.

Also, the minister should remember we have Meals on Wheels in these communities, which asks volunteers to cover many miles at lunchtime to try to deliver these meals. If we were able to put these senior citizens in residences—municipal, nonprofit seniors' residences—Meals on Wheels could very effectively deliver those meals on a daily basis to 28, 30 or 32 units, which would make everything so much easier. We could probably keep our senior citizens in their own place of residence a lot longer as opposed to having them in nursing homes where it would be very expensive.

This must be addressed by this minister as well as by the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston), the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney) and the Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs (Mr. Van Horne). They should all work in concert and bear these things in mind. These people are not asking for a handout; they are simply saying, "Give us a chance to maintain our own independence in our own apartments in the communities we know best." That is all they are asking.

Hon. Mr. Curling: I totally agree with the honourable member that these people are not asking for handouts; they just want to be treated

fairly and that we have a sensitive government, which we do have. Economic situations change as soon as life changes, in a way, and they approach life in a different way.

Of course, from time to time we will assess our program to see whether it is targeted properly. I emphasize again that our federal counterpart insists on this kind of procedure, but in the meantime, we as a province have to fight about the area in which we sometimes feel policies are not effective enough to reach those in need or a specific need itself.

There are those seniors who are a little more affluent—and that word becomes so loose these days—who do not require as much as some of the ones who are hard to house and for whom assistance from the government is necessary. We will be looking at that; we will be constantly monitoring that. The needs and the desires of those seniors that the member has expressed are the same things we are hearing out there, and that is the direction in which we are going.

Mr. Philip: I want to raise with the minister his new policy, for which we in this party had been asking for a number of years, concerning the possibility of a person applying, while being a tenant of Ontario Housing Corp., for an OHC unit. The circumstances arise that perhaps a family suddenly discovers that a son or daughter is out on the street. They do not wish to jeopardize their lease, which says they cannot have any boarders, but at the same time they are not going to leave a family member out on the street. The same thing can apply to a brother or sister or even a half-brother or half-sister.

In particular, I think of an instance I referred to John Sewell only last week. One of the companies working as the management of a Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority project is still advising tenants that unless the relatives leave, they will be evicted for having illegal tenants on the premises. The minister's officials downtown were still telling people as late as last month that they could not accept their applications because they were temporarily staying with a relative occupying a Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority unit. Why is the minister not advising his staff of the new policies and correcting this problem?

Hon. Mr. Curling: As the member knows, since we have taken the reins and control of government here in changing policies, I presume that certain decisions we have made and certain directions we have given have sometimes not been readily adhered to.

The member asked why I was not telling the personnel to carry out our directions. First, those have been changed. He indicated in his comments that this policy had changed. If an individual is living at a residence with his parents and he applies, previously he was not able to be qualified; now he is. The member is saying the staff are still giving information that the person is not qualified. We will again emphasize to the staff, in whatever communicated way, that this is the new law, the new rule, the new procedure, and those people should be considered and should not be put back by stating that they do not qualify under this new policy.

Mr. Philip: The minister should advise not only his staff but also some of the companies that are hired under contract to manage his buildings. Some of these private companies are simply not getting the message. If they are going to receive a government contract, the least they can do is to make sure their staff understand what the rules and regulations are for working under that contract.

What are the minister's views on the fairness—or lack of fairness, as I would call it—of the point rating system? One must recognize it is reasonable that a point rating system be based on need. However, what we have under the point system now is a system that virtually penalizes someone who, because he is afraid of not having enough food for the table, may move in with a relative or may move into substandard conditions.

I can give the minister a very concrete example. I have a woman and her children who are living in the basement of a building that has been condemned in North York. Whenever it rains, both she and the other neighbour, who is occupying the first floor—maybe it is vice versa; I forget which—literally have to get out of bed because the bed floods from rain dripping through the ceiling and down through the walls. It is that bad.

The city of North York has told the landlord he has to either repair or demolish the building. There are work orders outstanding on it. Because she is living in a place such as that, her rent is very small in relation to what the market rent would be in that neighbourhood. Yet despite the fact that she is living in unhealthy, abominable conditions, because she is paying a smaller percentage of her income for rent than someone who goes out and rents an apartment in the area for \$500, she is stuck with her children in these very unhealthy conditions. I suggest to the minister that the point system has to be looked at so there is some fairness in it.

I will give another example of where someone is put at a disadvantage because of the point system, and that is the person who is already living in some kind of geared-to-income housing but who wishes to apply for Metro Toronto housing. For example, he may be living with Metro Toronto housing company. He wants to apply for a Metro Toronto Housing Authority building because there may be psychological or cultural reasons.

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I have a constituent who is living at West Acres, which is a Metro Toronto housing company unit in Rexdale. While the gentleman himself speaks English, his wife speaks very limited English. They come from the High Park area where they can get doctor's service, friends, cultural clubs and shopping in their own language, and yet they have been waiting for a very long time to move into the High Park area. When one asks, they say they score very low on the point system because they are in geared-to-income housing in some form and they are not paying a large percentage of their income in rent. It is a situation where they are almost tempted to be irresponsible, move out, rent an apartment for \$600 for a few months and then, when they apply from outside, the ministry will give them the type of unit they want because they will get a higher rating on the point system.

Those are two examples where the point system, when it is based primarily on percentage of income being spent, acts as a disadvantage to certain people. Can the minister comment on that?

Hon. Mr. Curling: The honourable member touched on a very difficult process, the point system. The point system was amended in 1985, and yet there are still stories of incidents or cases one can bring forth that indicate it deprives certain people from living in the areas they wish, whether culture or convenience would dictate it. It comes down to a matter of supply. There is not enough to go around. There are people on the waiting list who have greater need when it comes to the income aspect of it, who are not in any one of our projects or do not have a rent-geared-to-income supplement given to them, while there are others in the project who would like to move to certain areas.

In my riding on Saturdays I see 10 or 12 people who would like a transfer. I have instructed them to cast their net a little wider. They say, "I would like to live in that area because my people are there and I feel more comfortable." The problem is that only when a vacancy comes up in that area

are they able to be transferred. In giving a wider option, they again will be moving to an area that they are not comfortable with culturally or perhaps where their children have grown up or have been in that area for some time.

I understand what the member is saying. It is a very difficult problem. Again, I can address that only from the point of view that it is supply. In each case, as the workers sit down with that individual, they are sensitive to that and able to accommodate them accordingly.

Mr. Philip: It is not a matter of supply. If a person moves from one unit, there is a vacant unit there for someone else who may want to live in that unit; it is not depriving someone else of a unit. The ministry is being insensitive to cultural differences and to some people who cannot speak the language. Just because they are poor, they should not be forced to live in communities where they feel alienated and where it contributes, in one case I know of, to mental health problems as a result of the frustration and alienation.

Concerning applications, is it still a policy of some housing authorities not to grant an application to people who have physical possession of children but not actual court orders allowing them final custody? In the past, it has been the practice of certain housing authorities to say, "If you have physical possession of children, then we assume you have a right to them until proven otherwise by a court." In other municipalities, other housing authorities simply say, "No; unless you have a court order giving you custody of the children, we cannot accept that application."

Is it now true across the board in Ontario that if a person has physical custody of children, an application will be accepted? Or do we still have this discrepancy from the Peel Regional Housing Authority to the Metro Toronto Housing Authority to the Hamilton-Wentworth Housing Authority?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I have just confirmed that the policy right across the province is that they should have a court authority for the jurisdiction over that child. However, there are housing authorities that can use their own discretion in accepting an individual as a child within that unit.

While you may hear that in one region there are cases where people have accepted those cases, in some cases they go exactly by the book and do not accept those individuals. I presume it is my old cliché that says sometimes rules are not binding but we should use them for guiding. I presume some regions use them that way to guide

themselves in regard to their projects, while others use them all as a binding process.

Let me quickly comment on the first part of the member's question. He asked whether if one moves, it makes a vacancy. I presume it is like musical chairs; if the supply is very short and one moves out, there is another one coming in to backfill all that. It is not a matter of whether someone moves. That person moves into somewhere if someone else was there, and that someone has to be moving into that place. If we had a tremendous supply and had a lot of vacancies, then we could have said it is a vacant place. As soon as we increase the supply with the tremendous amount of activity that we will see in our supply program, gradually we will address those problems where people are waiting so long to get into subsidized housing.

Mr. Philip: The minister's answer is as circular as the musical chairs he is talking about. The point I was making, and I thought it was a fairly simple point that anybody should be able to understand, was that the argument he makes that he cannot transfer somebody to a unit because there is short supply is completely spurious. The moment a person moves out of the unit he is occupying, you have the same number of vacancies as you had before. It does not take a unit off the market; it simply transfers it from one locality to another. Thus, it is a completely erroneous argument to make.

On the other statement, I find the minister's answer completely incredible. It can take you three years, sometimes longer, to get custody of a child if it is appealed, or worse still if the child happens to be taken to another province temporarily and you have to get orders to bring it back and so forth. I wonder why it is that someone in Peel can apply by simply saying: "I have this child. There is a divorce case pending, and the family court will decide. In the meantime, my husband is contesting it, but I have two children." Why can the minister supply that person with housing in Peel, but he cannot supply the same person with housing in North York or in Etobicoke?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I thought I answered the honourable gentleman. I do not want to be circular, as he said, in my answer. I was explaining to him that, because of the shortage of supply, this is what is happening. I will not attempt to go back into the debate about whether my answer was circular or quite incredible.

Again, as I said earlier on, the member raises a very important point about our transfer policy. It is something that the Ontario Housing Corp. is

looking at. It is reviewing it and looking at situations such as those.

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The time it takes to obtain custody of a child is something I cannot dictate; I have no control over that. There are procedures we follow. It is a much easier process to follow when the person has custody of the child before we regard that individual as responsible for the child. One could have two or three children in custody and it is a three-bedroom unit and then it is all changed; immediately we would have to move that individual from a three-bedroom to a one-bedroom unit. It becomes rather complex. I think having custody of the child is a better procedure to follow.

Mr. Philip: The minister's answer is fairly clear. He is saying that bureaucratic considerations are more important than children being out on the street in Metropolitan Toronto. That is what he is saying; that is the insensitivity he is showing. Why is it the same family can move to Peel, make an application to the Peel Regional Housing Authority and get housing in Peel whereas it cannot in Metropolitan Toronto? Is a child out on the street in Metropolitan Toronto any different from a child in Peel? If Peel can give them housing, why cannot Metro Toronto Housing Authority?

Why does the minister not have some consistency and fairness across the province that says the important thing is not the legal status of a child, but that there is a child and his mother or father who need housing, and that regardless of what the courts want to do and regardless of how long they want to drag it out, there will be housing until such time as it is proven the child is not living with the parent?

So be it if in a couple of year's time the courts rule otherwise. It may upset his bureaucratic applegart if it has to transfer them from a three-bedroom to a two-bedroom unit or transfer them out completely because they do not have any children. Until that time, why not give them accommodation and give consideration to the children rather than to his stupid bureaucracy?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I presume it is all in the process of debate that the honourable member can stand there and talk about my sensitivity. His sensitivity is so great that he makes these wild statements about no policy and no process; then everyone feels he is quite sensitive. That is not the way we operate and that is not the way I operate.

Again, I tell him that we are dealing with different regions and that we have a policy in

place. Each person looks at each case and some people may be a little more compassionate than others. Some people will follow the rules to every line; some may be more flexible. I cannot answer why Peel is more sensitive than some other area. I cannot tell the member why I am more sensitive than he is. He has indicated I have no sensitivity. I do not know who gave him the authority to feel he has this right to find who is sensitive and who is not sensitive. I try to conduct my work in a very sensitive and compassionate way. For the member to stand and say that does not take anything from me. I will continue to do my work in a very sensitive manner. I hope to look at all the cases he brings before me and see that it is done in a very humane way.

Mr. Philip: The minister is not only insensitive, but he is also unknowledgeable. If he had read Hansard, the statements and reports of the standing committee on administration of justice on Ontario Housing, he would know there are policies that have been advocated by this party for a number of years, which if he adopted them would mean people in Toronto would be treated with the same fairness as people in Peel.

What kind of policy does the minister have when it is so wishy-washy, so incomprehensible, that it is interpreted one way in one municipality and another way in another? Does he call that a policy? That is not a policy. Why does he blame Peel or the local authorities for his ineptness in having a clear policy that will give fairness to everyone across the province? It is the minister who is insensitive, who is unknowledgeable and who has no policy. Why does he not get off his butt and do something about it?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I am very surprised at that member from a very reputable party, a party that considers itself the party of the people. As soon as we take the reins, immediately I become insensitive; he has the authority to find out who is insensitive or not. I could challenge the member any time with the amount of sensitivity I have. We can debate this all day. I do not even intend to compare myself with the gentleman; not at all.

We will continue to be a sensitive government. As a matter of fact, members have seen that ever since the sun rose on that day in 1985. Members have seen a very sensitive government. The gentleman does not have to walk far. He can just walk out on the street—Mr. Chairman, you know that—and ask the people how they feel about Ontario. They feel confident. They feel there is a government that is responding to their needs at last. This honourable gentleman is telling me that I am not sensitive. I do not intend to stand here to

defend myself or to say that this party or this government has been very sensitive. Perhaps we look extremely sensitive because of the lack of sensitivity, good opposition and good government in the past.

Mr. Philip: Since the minister is so sensitive, the next time I have a family whose application is refused by the Metro Toronto Housing Authority because the parent does not have legal custody of a child and it may take two to three years for the courts to decide, instead of sending those people to apply in Peel, Hamilton or one of the other housing authorities that seems to have some sensitivity or at least seems to bend rules that are not completely comprehensible, I will send them to the minister's house. He can put them up instead of the Peel Regional Housing Authority, and we will see just how sensitive the minister is.

Mr. Gordon: I have been listening very attentively to everything that has been said. I am afraid to use that new word that the minister has taken possession of in the House. It starts with "S." Are we soon going to have an encounter session in this House? Perhaps we should all get together and have some touchy-feely talks with each other down on the broadloom, take off our shoes and our boots and just sort of get together. After all, the minister is telling us what a sensitive place this has become. I think he used the word "sensitive" about 50 times in the past five minutes.

I know the minister is as sensitive as the member for Etobicoke (Mr. Philip). I would not suggest for one moment that he is an insensitive person, but talking about encounter groups rather than housing does not do any of us any good. However, we will not talk about that now. Let us talk about something else for a change.

Can the minister tell us whether, with his much-vaunted Renterprise program and his convert-to-rent program—I have asked about two programs—these programs are really going to provide housing for those people who are in need of affordable housing in this province or are they programs that are just going to turn out more and more housing for people who can well afford it?

Hon. Mr. Curling: The programs we put in place will definitely bring about housing for those in need. As the member knows, the Renterprise program has been quite successful. The last time I responded to the honourable gentleman about the Renterprise program, he asked me to be kind when I made reference to one of his colleagues, the shadow cabinet minister for Citizenship and Culture. I call the member for Don Mills (Mr. Timbrell) the shadow minister or

the shadow. He never comes in here. He felt the private sector would not build in that program.

We as a government made our program in such a way that the private sector participates, and there are other programs in which the government assists fully. The Renterprise program is one that has been extremely successful. As a matter of fact, as I said when the honourable member stated that no one would build, we had applications coming to us that we could not handle. We reached our target of 5,000 very quickly on our first call, and we had a second call on that program.

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The convert-to-rent program is highly successful. I responded to the member's previous question in estimates. As the member will recall, I made reference to one of the programs in his own area, in Sudbury, where we converted one of the schools into a senior citizens' home. Forty per cent of those Renterprise programs are geared to core need, to the people in need. The convert-to-rent program targets 25 per cent of the units to those in need. If I can anticipate the critic's question, market rents play a very important role in this because of community acceptance and the type of program we can put within certain communities.

Mr. Gordon: I think the minister has answered my question. What he has told me is that his program has failed. He has told me that of the 5,000 that have been taken up, 40 per cent of those in the Renterprise program and 25 per cent of those in the convert-to-rent program go to those in need; in other words, to those who require subsidized housing.

First, I am sure the minister is aware that there are 40,000 families in Ontario in need of subsidized housing and that through his advertising and so forth he found another 28,000 families. He is telling me that this year, with his proposals so far, he has had 5,000 taken up as far as those people who have proposed to build them are concerned. Whether all of them will be built is a moot point because we know already that some of the people who said they would go into Renterprise are beginning to back out for various reasons, which we could go into in great depth in this House. With 40 per cent of 5,000 that are not really built yet, or 25 per cent of 5,000 where some of the developers are backing out, how can he tell us this is providing for those who are most in need of affordable housing when we know that 40,000 families right now are waiting? In fact, there are more than 40,000. There are 40,000 plus 28,000.

The minister has answered the question: he has failed.

Hon. Mr. Curling: Although I have answered the question, I think the member did not understand the answer. The Renterprise program is an extremely successful program. The member spoke of some who have backed out. I am not aware of anyone who has backed out, as the member for Sudbury (Mr. Gordon) put it, because they feel the program is no good. There could be cases in which the land may not have gone through or they have had some other problems, but I am not aware of those. However, if he has any specific cases of people who are backing out because they feel the program will not work, he should let me know. My staff will be right there to assist and to show them what the programs are. In fact, many people are waiting who, if there should be any who fall away from the Renterprise program, would be glad to take up the program.

The convert-to-rent program is also very successful. I want to make one thing very clear: we never said that low-income people would be accommodated there. People of various incomes would be located within those projects.

Mr. Gordon: We will move on to the next question now because it is obvious the minister does not have a successful program, a program that is providing sufficient housing for the people who need it most. I will ask him another question. Is the add-a-unit program still operating, and if so, does the minister plan to carry on with it or to do away with it?

Hon. Mr. Curling: No, that program is not operating any more.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I have just a couple of brief questions for the minister. Can he outline the policy of his ministry on the provision of emergency housing?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I presume the question is whether the Ministry of Housing carries emergency housing. It is only for battered women that we have a project. In our 3,000 units, we accommodate applications for emergency housing in regard to battered women. My colleague the Minister of Community and Social Services is the minister who is responsible for emergency shelter.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: Is the ministry planning any proposals to correct the problem that exists in many of our communities? I point out to the minister that our community in Windsor has had extensive meetings with members of Parliament, MPPs, the mayor and members of city council,

and we have looked at the problem of emergency housing.

Proposals had been put forward to the ministry by a group called the Windsor Coalition for Development, which is recognized as a group in Windsor that has provided a substantial contribution in the whole area of housing for low-income families and has in many ways been the conscience of the housing problem in our community, putting forward the problems and some practical solutions.

It is not good enough for the minister to say it is the responsibility of the Minister of Community and Social Services when low-income earners are one of the groups that are experiencing substantial problems in being able to find housing, and emergency housing in particular; that is, short-term housing when they move into a community or get a notice from their landlord or when a conversion is taking place and there is no place for them to live. They are working and so they do not qualify for emergency housing assistance through the welfare office. They do not get any assistance from the Ministry of Community and Social Services if they are working poor because they do not qualify. They have to try to find a motel on a short-term basis on their own, and try to pay those costs and still continue to provide for their families. They do not qualify for subsidies unless they qualify under the General Welfare Assistance Act.

What do those people do? What do low-income people do who are above the line to qualify under the General Welfare Assistance Act? Where do they get assistance for emergency housing?

Hon. Mr. Curling: The member for Windsor-Riverside raised this point very explicitly in a letter to me, I think twice. My response to the member, as I recall—I stated this in reply to the first question—was that it falls under the Ministry of Community and Social Services. The member states that this is not good enough. I know he would wish me to carry a responsibility beyond my jurisdiction, but my colleague the Minister of Community and Social Services does a very effective job on emergency shelter. It is unfortunate how the process has gone in his area. At one stage it was stated that emergency shelter would fall under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Housing. I was able to get some support, and then the staff got back to them and indicated that it fell within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Community and Social Services and that they should pursue their project under that ministry.

I cannot assist him any further in that regard. This is something on which we could work hand in hand. I state this because all the projects I have require the Ministry of Community and Social Services or the Ministry of Health to work closely with us to make sure those people do not fall between the cracks. In that specific program we are still pursuing and working out with the Ministry of Community and Social Services any way we can help.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: The minister has not answered my question. My question was, what do people do who do not qualify for general welfare assistance? How do the working poor get assistance for emergency housing in Ontario? They do not qualify under the Ministry of Community and Social Services, because their income is such that they are above the guidelines for general welfare assistance.

Maybe the minister does not really understand what emergency housing is now provided by his colleague. He says his colleague does a good job of providing emergency housing. Does the minister understand? Maybe he can outline for the House his idea of what emergency housing is provided right now by the Ministry of Community and Social Services in Ontario. What emergency housing is the minister aware of that the Ministry of Community and Social Services provides right now?

1650

Hon. Mr. Curling: I can get back to the member about the emergency housing supplied by the Ministry of Community and Social Services. I can get back to him and tell him about all the emergency housing and the initiatives that ministry is taking.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: The minister said a few minutes ago that his colleague is doing a great job of providing emergency housing in Ontario, but he does not know how he provides it.

Let me tell him how he provides it in the city of Windsor. We have a Salvation Army hostel for men in which there are a bunch of cots in a room. I am not criticizing the Salvation Army. It has done a good job during the years, but it is inadequate to have as emergency housing in 1987 a hostel with just cots set up. That is not the type of facility that should be available. There should be more available.

There is a youth hostel that is available, which is also run by the Salvation Army. For families that would like to stay together, all they can do, if they qualify under the General Welfare Assistance Act, is to apply through welfare for assistance and the welfare department will put

them up in a motel. If they do not qualify for welfare, if they are working poor or they have just come into the community for a job and have a bit of cash that would come in handy when they move into a home or try to find a facility in the community to live in, they qualify for no assistance at all under the General Welfare Assistance Act.

Maybe the minister can tell me how a working family on low income qualifies for any type of emergency housing supplied by either his ministry or the Ministry of Community and Social Services. Where do they go for help in Ontario now?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I explained to the member that the only type of emergency shelter that falls under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Housing is that for battered women, and the criteria under which they can apply are laid out there. However, the member is not addressing his statement to that issue. He is asking how they apply under the Ministry of Community and Social Services. I do not stand here pretending that I know the criteria and how they apply to the Ministry of Community and Social Services.

At one stage, the member seemed to indicate that he knew the process. I am telling him that I can get back to him and tell him how they apply for emergency shelter through the municipality or through the Ministry of Community and Social Services.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: Maybe the solution to the problem is that the minister be made to understand that the only available emergency housing in Ontario is either hostels or, if one qualifies for general welfare assistance being put up in a motel for a short time; and if the minister agrees with me that that is inadequate, that it does not meet the needs of either the people who qualify for general welfare assistance or the working poor in this province who do not qualify for general welfare and therefore cannot get help for emergency housing, can he explain to me what plans are in place or what studies are taking place to look at the role his ministry can play in solving the problem of emergency housing?

Hon. Mr. Curling: That was rather specific. Yes, I agree with the member that it is inadequate and that people are not able to get the type of accommodation they need. That is why the Ministry of Community and Social Services is working with the Social Assistance Review in looking at the issue of parity of treatment for those who are on welfare and for the working poor. The member has identified many situations of people who do not qualify, and the Social

Assistance Review is looking at that situation at this moment.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: Can the minister tell me whether he has ever heard of a group called the supportive community living committee and what the terms of reference for that committee are?

Hon. Mr. Curling: Yes, I do know.

Mr. McClellan: They told you to say that.

Hon. Mr. Curling: No. Of course I know of the supportive community living committee.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: Will the minister confirm that one the terms of reference for that committee is to study a possible solution to the emergency housing problem in Ontario? His bureaucrats told me last week when I was talking to them that this committee had been set up and was studying the problem of emergency housing, yet we have been going through this for 10 minutes and the minister never once told me about this committee. Mr. Lucas in the London office told me that he had spoken to the housing policy and program development branch and that this committee had been set up. It is an interministerial committee with the ministry playing the lead role, and one of its terms of reference is to look at a solution to emergency housing problems in Ontario. Can the minister tell me a bit about the committee?

Hon. Mr. Curling: We could go into all the names of committees and all that I have mentioned. Without naming the committee, I work very closely with my colleague the Minister of Health and my colleague the Minister of Community and Social Services. All three ministers work together in resolving some of the problems we see, especially in emergency shelter and all the other inadequacies we find in the system with regard to housing and how we deal with those falling between the cracks.

I was of course going to mention the supportive community living committee. I mentioned the committee we worked together with, that it had been struck and chaired by the Ministry of Housing. I am aware of that. Those matters the member raised are the matters we are looking into and will be addressing.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I am never quite clear when I hear this minister answer a question. Is the minister saying that one of the terms of reference for this committee is the whole problem of emergency housing? Since the minister admitted a few minutes ago that he agreed with me that hostels and motel arrangements for those who qualify for general welfare assistance are not an adequate response from this government for

emergency housing, is it safe to say that this committee is looking at a more substantial response to the problems of emergency needs in the province? When can we expect a report from this committee on the emergency housing problem?

Hon. Mr. Curling: Each ministry plays a specific role in the sense of what is called for emergency shelter. The committee has got together to address all the issues the member has raised. If he is asking whether we are looking at emergency shelter, of course we are looking at emergency shelter; we have many studies. The one I just released on roomers, boarders and lodgers will also be one they will be looking at.

Each ministry plays its own role. Many times when a ministry carries out its jurisdiction, be it the Ministry of Housing, the Ministry of Health or the Ministry of Community and Social Services, it does not come together properly. The supportive community living committee will be looking at where they fall between the cracks in qualification or what criteria should be used to spread the net to include everyone in this process.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I am not quite sure what the minister just said. Can he tell me whether he, as Minister of Housing, is prepared to accept the lead role for the provision of emergency housing in Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I do not know whether the member is asking me to take the lead in emergency housing. I am not in a position to say I will be doing that. We are working together to determine where best these things can be addressed. I cannot stand here and tell the member I will take the lead role for emergency housing.

1700

Mr. D. S. Cooke: Can the minister tell me, and make it very clear, that the supportive community living committee has it in its terms of reference to examine the problem of emergency housing and make recommendations to his ministry? If so, when does he expect a report on this issue?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I feel a good time would be about May 1987.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: Will the minister and his staff take a second look at the proposal that was put forward to the regional office in London from the Windsor Coalition for Development, which is a unique proposal to provide emergency housing for families, with the provision of dignity and some privacy through the separation of families? First, it could be used as a pilot

project to see whether it is one of the solutions to the short-term housing needs of families. Second, the crisis that exists in our community for housing right now is not something he can turn his back on.

There has been the provision of a few units this year in the nonprofit sector through the federal and provincial program for nonprofit housing, but the number of units is not substantial enough to meet the needs of the problem. I think our vacancy rate is down to 0.4 per cent. One of the problems we have is families that, for whatever reason, lose their housing, whether it is because of a financial problem that comes upon the family, whether they are moving into the community and have not been able to establish themselves yet or whether there is the demolition of a building. Whatever the reason, there is a loss of housing and an emergency situation.

Because the vacancy rate is so incredibly low, families do not know how to go about looking for housing. We do not have support systems in the community. Many people have lived in my community all their lives and have never seen a housing crisis such as we have now. There have always been affordable units available for families to move into. Now we have documented cases of something in the neighbourhood of 55 to 65 over a five-month period from the Windsor Coalition for Development, plus cases that were put forward by my office and by the MPs' offices.

There have been two trilevel meetings on this issue. Herb Gray has been one of the most outspoken. He demanded that the Ministry of Housing play a role in the provision of emergency housing. If the minister will review his correspondence or telephone calls over the past few weeks, he will find that he received a few telephone calls and/or letters from Mr. Gray suggesting that it might be wise to take a second look at the proposal from the Windsor coalition because of the crisis that exists in our community.

Will the minister look at that proposal and perhaps use it as a pilot project and try to work something out with the nonprofit group, which has an excellent record of providing housing in our community for low-income families? It is supported by the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye) and myself, and by Mr. Gray, Mr. McCurdy and Mr. Langdon. All of us supported the proposal. Perhaps he can look at it and use it as a pilot project to see what different types of emergency housing for families can be provided so that we can provide decent accommodation on an emer-

gency basis, with support services to help people make the transition from emergency facilities to long-term housing.

Hon. Mr. Curling: The member has made a good point. I will bring the matter of the emergency shelter he spoke about to the attention of my colleague the Minister of Community and Social Services. I cannot promise the member that I am the one to lead off on emergency shelter and have it in my ministry. It falls under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Community and Social Services, and I will bring it to his attention.

In his statement and questions, the member identified the magnitude of the need for supportive housing. As well, improved strategies are needed for gaining community acceptance of these projects. The other part is the solutions to the regulations and legislative obstacles that are in the way and hinder these projects from going forward.

The mandate of the supportive community living committee that was struck is to look specifically at those three areas. By May, the report will address many of the member's concerns and the concerns not only of Windsor-Riverside but also of those across Ontario.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I was not going to carry this on any further, but the minister said he would refer the matter to his colleague the Minister of Community and Social Services. Does the minister not realize that the Ministry of Community and Social Services has no capital whatsoever to provide emergency housing? It provides the per diems for emergency housing.

This is the ministry responsible for participating in the building of housing, and we are looking at a different type of emergency housing. We are not looking at hostels; we are not looking at motels. We are looking at providing a permanent facility with individual units that families can use on an emergency basis. The Ministry of Community and Social Services will not provide the funding for that, because capital is required.

I am asking the minister whether he will take a second look at it and consider it as a pilot project instead of referring it to the Ministry of Community and Social Services, which is a useless referral.

Hon. Mr. Curling: I do not know how to comment on that remark. All I am saying is that the matter of emergency shelter comes under the Ministry of Community and Social Services. The member feels there is enough capital within my budget to do that. It is not a matter of where the money is; it is where the jurisdiction falls.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: They do not have capital.

Hon. Mr. Curling: Regardless of whether it has capital, that program falls under the Ministry of Community and Social Services. I will raise the matter with the minister. The supportive community living committee will look at situations such as these, and I hope we will be able to resolve those problems.

I received many letters and telephone calls from the member's area, and I would like to confirm that. The Honourable Herb Gray wrote to me on two occasions and indicated his interest. I do not want to stand here pretending, if the member feels I am pretending. I am not quite aware of the situation in Windsor-Riverside and the kind of support shown by the members in that area. Again, I will refer that specific program to the minister who is responsible for emergency shelter.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I want to make one final point. The minister says he has to refer it to the Ministry of Community and Social Services because it is the ministry responsible. The only reason the minister has to refer it to that ministry is that he and his government will not take responsibility for emergency housing under the appropriate ministry, the Ministry of Housing.

There is nothing written in stone that says the minister has to have the Ministry of Community and Social Services deal with this. If the minister wanted to show some leadership and if his ministry wanted to solve this problem, he would look at a pilot project such as this and consider funding it. However, because the minister has received the word from his bureaucrats that it is written in Liberal stone that this has to be sent to the Ministry of Community and Social Services, he is not prepared to take a second look at it.

What is there that says the Minister of Housing cannot look at a proposal for emergency housing? The only one who says that is the minister. If he wanted to do so, he could. He does not want to do that, so he is going to leave families out in the street.

1710

Hon. Mr. Curling: When I said I would refer it to the minister, it was not because he is not aware of it; I am quite sure he is. Since the member raised the matter in estimates, I thought I would make that comment to the minister. Supportive community living will be looking at these types of things. It is there to say of problems like these: "How do we deal with it? Are they falling between the cracks?"

I can promise the member I will look at this project again, but it does not fall within the

criteria of the Ministry of Housing to deal with it. Supportive community living looks at how we will set up new criteria. I have said that over and over again, but I presume he wants this program to be approved today. We are looking at policy, at more than this one project.

Mr. McFadden: I would like to direct some questions to the minister with regard to rent review. We are dealing with both votes together, as I understand it.

Hon. Mr. Curling: That is the next vote.

Mr. McFadden: I was told by the chairman we were dealing with both votes at the same time.

Hon. Mr. Curling: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman: What procedure would you like?

The Deputy Chairman: The original procedure was that we would discuss each vote.

Hon. Mr. Curling: If you want me to move to a vote other than 1904, we can proceed.

Mr. McClellan: Carried.

Mrs. Marland: Not unless we are going to go back.

Hon. Mr. Curling: No jumping back and forth.

The Deputy Chairman: Does the member have questions on vote 1904?

Mr. McFadden: Perhaps I received some erroneous information from the Chairman. I spoke to him and was led to believe the two votes were being dealt with together.

The Deputy Chairman: The original understanding was that we would discuss each vote and then vote on it.

Mr. Gordon: Mr. Chairman, I beg to inform you that the minister agreed the other day that we would discuss these two votes together. It was agreed last week that since certain members wished to participate in the debate on Thursday but due to constituency business could not be here, we would deal with community housing and this business of the last vote together today. That was the understanding. I point that out to you and to the minister.

Hon. Mr. Curling: Let me bring you up to date, Mr. Chairman. I am sure you read Hansard and see what I say. In the last estimates meeting in committee of supply, the honourable member stated that his members would not be here on that date and I stated that if we completed vote 1904 on that day, then I would go back to it today. We can do vote 1904 now, complete it and move to vote 1905. I am not saying we must flip-flop from 1905 to 1904 to 1905. We only have a few

moments. I know the member is excited about getting to vote 1905.

Mr. Gordon: In that case, to make things easier for the chair, I have a few points I would like to raise on vote 1904. Then I understand the member for Eglinton (Mr. McFadden) would like to talk about vote 1905. The member for Mississauga South (Mrs. Marland) also wishes to address vote 1904 for a few moments. Then we can move on to vote 1905.

The Deputy Chairman: We will continue on vote 1904.

Mr. Gordon: Perhaps the minister is not conversant with the real problem of people in this province who lack affordable housing. Perhaps he is not aware of what it means to be among the 40,000 families in Ontario right now—as a matter of fact, there are more than 40,000 families, as I pointed out to him earlier this afternoon, who require decent housing. I would like to outline some of the cases I have dealt with in Sudbury in the past year. These are some representative cases. I will leave out the names or change the names of the people my office has dealt with. I will not read the letters I wrote, but I will give the minister the basic facts.

These cases are repeated innumerable times across this province. When I point out to the minister, who has his Renterprise and convert-to-rent programs, that only 40 per cent of the units developed under Renterprise are going to these people who need them most and that only 25 per cent of those people who require affordable housing—good social housing—are going to live in convert-to-rent, these are the people I am talking about. I would like to put this on the record so he will at least know what we are talking about in this House, because I am not sure he does know. That is why I want to raise these cases with him at this time.

We will start first with the case of a woman we will call Ms. Jones. This is not her real name. She moved to Sudbury in July with a two-year-old and was expecting a child. The only apartment they could afford is on Spruce Street; again, this is not the correct street. The landlord has given notice to vacate for February 1. The second child has arrived. The husband cannot find a job. The young child had asthma. Ventilation is very important for this child because the asthma is so bad, and it is very important that this child have a window; there is no window. The doctor has even submitted a note to the Sudbury Housing Authority, yet the apartment is so small that it could be classed as having one bedroom. This family needs two bedrooms.

What does the local housing authority say? Sudbury housing says it cannot help and the family will have to find something else. It just does not have the units to deal with this person because the waiting list in Sudbury is so long. Attached to this is a letter I wrote at that time to Mr. Condon, the senior property manager. I pointed out at that time, “I urge you to do everything possible to have this family placed at the earliest possible date.”

That is one example. I will give the minister another case; I could bring him a file like that. We will call this person Mary Smith. She has three children and a baby. She has letters, which would go to the Sudbury Housing Authority, from two physicians—not one but two—supporting her need for better housing. The baby, who was premature, is under the care of specialists in Toronto.

I want to tell the minister about the kind of apartment this family is living in now in Sudbury. The smoke detectors do not work, the roof leaks, the doors do not close properly and there are no locks. Someone broke in while the family was out one evening. There are fleas in the apartment and the baby, who was premature, suffers from bites all over its legs. As well, the apartment is cold. When it was called, the housing authority said it would put this family on the waiting list for a two-bedroom apartment, but it had no idea when one would be available.

Here is another example. This describes the kind of conditions some people are forced to live in because there is not an adequate supply of affordable housing in Ontario. There was another call to us in September. The person, who has a 14-month-old child, indicated the apartment was infested with roaches and the shower did not work. We again talked to the housing authority. The comeback was that it could not provide housing at that time. There is just not enough rent-geared-to-income or subsidized housing in Sudbury.

I will give the minister another example. This couple requires a two-bedroom apartment. Most of their family is grown. They have worked hard but always at a minimum wage, barely scraping by. They are what we call the working poor in this province, and they are penalized for it. When we checked in June, they had 110 points, and there were 50 to 60 families ahead of them. Very few move out, and always they are bumped by others whose cases are more urgent.

1720

Here is another one: This family has two children, a girl and an infant boy. They live in a

small two-bedroom apartment. The infant sleeps with the parents in their room. His crib is so close to a hot radiator that they live in fear he will touch it and be burned, but they cannot move the crib elsewhere because of the size and configuration of the bedroom. This person has been on the list for a year and has 125 points. As well, the temperature of the apartment is irregular. The father in this family is more fortunate than some of those others who are waiting for subsidized housing in the community because he is going to school and receiving some funding, so the family gets more money than others.

These are the kinds of conditions these people are faced with. These are the kinds of conditions these people live in. I could go on and on. I have a whole stack of these right here.

I am saying that in the minister's subsidized housing in this province, he is playing a little bit of a game with the people out there. I will tell him what the game is. The game is that he goes out with these proposals for Renterprise and convert-to-rent and he comes back into this House and says, "Oh, we have 5,000 that have been taken up already," meaning he is trying to tell us that 5,000 units are going to be built.

First of all, we know that all 5,000 are not going to be built. But even if the 5,000 are built, we know he plays another game with the people who need housing out there in this great province of ours. Do members know what he does? He does not give the local housing authorities enough rent supplement funding in order for the housing authority to take up the new units that are coming on stream. That is what he is doing.

While he tells us he is going to build 1,000 units in any city one wants to name, or let us say he is going to build 500 units, the facts of the matter are that when the time comes for those units to be turned over for those people who really need them, for those people who have a subsidized rent when they take a unit, the local housing authority says to the developer, "We would like to take 40 per cent of those units, we would like to take 25 per cent of the convert-to-rent units and we would like to have people who need subsidy living in those units; but the local housing authority does not have the funding to make it possible." It does not have the funding because the province does not give it to them.

I urge the minister, when he gets up to make a reply to these points, to be very careful, because we will have on record exactly what he is going to say about this today. All we have to do is to go out and find a number of cases, and the minister

knows who is going to have to answer: He is going to have to answer.

I am telling him to quit this charade whereby he is forcing the poor in this province to have less. Sure, right now the government is helping the developers. They are doing very well. They are building these apartment buildings. But when the time comes for them to be rented, they will all be rented out to people who can well afford those apartments, and the people who really need them will not get them. There are too many cases like that in this province, and we want it to stop.

I want to be told. I want him to get up in this House and tell us right now that with regard to every one of those Renterprise units that are built in this province, and every one of those convert-to-rent units that are built in this province and that are finished by the year 1986-87, when they come on stream, we will not be told in this Legislature or in those communities across this province that people who really need those units are not getting them. In other words, for the 40 per cent he promised in Renterprise, the money is going to be there; for the 25 per cent in convert-to-rent, the money is going to be there.

We want to hear him say that in this House today, and if he cannot say it in this House today, this is all smoke and mirrors, a bloody charade.

Hon. Mr. Curling: I hope the honourable member's blood pressure did not rise too high. The charade was over on June 26, 1985. When members bait me by responding like that, sometimes I am even ashamed of myself. The job of this government is to address the causes and the needs, not to go back to find blame and come into the committee with a long list of people who were neglected for years. Should I presume they all developed that need since June 26, 1985? If affordable buildings were available to those people, they would not be at the doorstep now asking for these needs to be addressed. I hope the people see through the little acting my dear critic put on a little while ago and see that the need did not come about overnight; it has been there for a long time.

In these estimates, I have heard people talking about sensitivity and stopping the charade and what have you. We are all born human beings and then some of us spend a long time trying to be sensitive. The Renterprise program that the member described is just for that. We address not only those people who are paying 30 per cent of their income in rent but also all the various levels of low income to a certain degree.

Talking about charades and smokescreens, I could talk about puffing and blowing at the same time or whatever the expression is. The member's colleagues stood up—I am sure the member was here—not long ago, a couple of hours or so ago, and said: “Forty per cent is too much. Why is the minister targeting the needy? Why is he doing that?” Then the member stands up and says to me that 40 per cent is not enough. I cannot understand that. We knew we were sensitive to the community. Some communities are much more affluent than others and do not need 40 per cent for rental accommodation.

He says to me, “Stop the charade.” Does he mean to stop those thousands of units I have approved to address the needy? Is he saying to put more there? Has he spoken to his cousins in Ottawa about giving us more subsidies to address the needy? He has not done that. I do not think he wants to kiss them any more; they are just cousins now. They are trying to dissociate from them. Has he told the federal government that in coming into this program as a government to address the neglect, we now are paying 40 per cent of the subsidy to support more housing projects? Is he telling them that when we tried to address the need for 3,000 units to house those who are hard to house, there was no sharing and the province came up with 100 per cent of the money? What charade? Where?

The program we have in place will not solve all the problems. It will not solve the situation we have now. I tell the member for Sudbury (Mr. Gordon) that of course I feel for the people in his constituency who are spending so much money for rent and may have no funds to spend on food or other survival items they need to carry on their daily lives. He may tell his constituents that I hope within a very short time, perhaps five years, we can look back and say we attacked this aggressively for the hard-to-house. As I said, we direct our program towards those who are having extreme difficulty in finding affordable accommodation.

I will continue to work with my dear colleague as he brings forward all these problems, and we will continue to help in any specific way that we can. However, those programs I have approved in the past two years will not solve the entire problem. We have to do more and we know it. Therefore, let us put our heads together in the demonstration, the action and the approach that we take and solve that kind of problem.

1730

Mr. Gordon: Let the record show that the minister refused to promise in this House that the

subsidy dollars would be available for the various local housing authorities for those units that are built in Ontario under the Renterprise and convert-to-rent programs. Note very carefully that he refused to promise that all the units that would normally be taken up by those who require subsidized housing—that is, the 40 per cent and the 25 per cent—would be available with subsidy dollars for those who need those units.

Let the record show that, and then the next time you pick up a paper or listen to the radio and hear this government bragging about its assured housing program, keep in mind that it is hot air and smoke and mirrors. It knows very well that those units are not going to be occupied by the people who most need them. In many cases, they are going to be occupied by people who can very well afford to live in them. They are going to be filled with people who can afford to pay \$650 to \$850 a month in rent. Just remember that the poor in this province, the families about whom I just read to you in this House, are not going to be living there. Those people are still going to be living in terrible conditions. They are going to be living where the roof leaks and there are cockroaches and fleas crawling over the baby, because this minister absolutely refuses to see that the subsidy dollars are there.

I am sure he is going to get up now; he has to. He has to get up and try to say something. Do you know what they are going to whisper in his ear? They are going to whisper, “Say it is the federal government's fault; talk about the cousins,” and all this malarkey.

Do you want to know the truth about this government? The first budget the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) came through with right in this House—I can remember his getting up and doing it, socking it to the people of Ontario, jacking up their personal income tax from 48 per cent to 50 per cent provincially and adding on all kinds of other ways to raise money.

Do you know what he got out of that? More than \$1 billion. Since the last budget he brought in, he already has more than \$400 million in surplus that he has taken out of the pockets of the people of Ontario. This government refuses to take that money and help the poor, those people who really need affordable housing—the Minister of Housing refuses to go to the cabinet table and get that money from the Treasurer.

This is the so-called sensitive government we listened to a little while ago. Not more than half an hour ago, we had to listen to a charade between the member for Etobicoke (Mr. Philip) and the minister talking about sensitivity. The

minister used the word "sensitivity" about 50 times. The minister and his ministry do not know anything about sensitivity; they are crass. The way they are spending money right now on advertising is almost criminal. For shame; they are not helping those people out there. We have caught on to them.

Mr. Chairman: The member for Mississauga South was on her feet first; sorry.

Mr. Taylor: I was on your list, though.

Mrs. Marland: Last Thursday I was asking the Minister of Housing about the accommodation of a special group of people within our province, namely, the victims of domestic violence, in terms of emergency shelters. An example is Interim Place, which is in my riding.

At that time, in response to some of my questions, the minister referred to his 3,000 units for the hard-to-house. At the time, I tried to indicate to the minister that I was not asking about long-term accommodation; I was asking about interim emergency shelters. Since we dealt with that and since the minister is very gung-ho about his provision of these 3,000 units for the hard-to-house—I recognize it is difficult for the minister to listen to his staff and to my question, but maybe he is multitasking.

In dealing with the 3,000 units for the hard-to-house, as he describes them, I suggest that probably the kinds of people who fall into the hard-to-house category would be people who are mentally, physically or emotionally disabled. They are people who may currently be housed in unsuitable hostels, they may be people who are in some form of interim housing or, indeed, they may be people who are well enough to be released from other formal institutions, even hospitals, if we could find the appropriate housing for them.

If we agree that those are the descriptions of people who are categorized and eligible as the hard-to-house groups, I wonder what commitment the minister has from the other ministries to provide the special support packages for those particular groups of people. I would suggest that for many of them, whether they have a physical or mental disability or whether they are former psychiatric patients who simply require some monitoring or supervision, the solution will not be just purely to give them the physical plant, the physical roof over their heads.

When I see the needs at the local level in Mississauga and in the region of Peel—in Peel we have a group called PAHA, which is the Peel Association of Handicapped Adults; we also have Mississauga Community Living, which

formerly was MAMR, the Mississauga Association for the Mentally Retarded, and some other groups that are dealing with these difficulties—I would suggest to the minister that to provide the physical plant will not be the solution.

Therefore, I wonder what commitments he has had today from the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston), the Minister of Correctional Services (Mr. Keyes) and possibly the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney). What commitment does he have from these other ministries that he will have, for these hard-to-house groups, the kind of support staff and support packages that will be needed for them to survive in their own accommodation? What is the answer to that in 1987?

Hon. Mr. Curling: As the member knows, the way this government works is that before we put projects in place, we make sure they are well thought out and that all parties involved are consulted. The program is then put in place, and then the announcement is made.

The member asked quite a few questions there that I thought I had addressed previously, but I will say it again; I presume that emphasis makes the points much better. I will instruct my staff immediately to send a couple of copies to her constituency office, because many people will be asking about this and it will be very helpful.

The groups to be served will be homeless individuals; battered spouses; physically, developmentally and psychiatrically handicapped adults; and low-income singles on a demonstration basis. The one the member zeroed in on was the one about battered spouses; our special provincial initiative of 3,000 units specifically addresses emergency shelter for battered spouses.

1740

The other part of the member's question was about the well thought out processes. Consultation went on with the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Community and Social Services. I will read the press release that was sent out: "Most of the groups in today's allocation require support care funding, and final approval will be given when this funding is secured and other criteria are met."

The 3,000 units are special, and they have complete provincial funding. The Ministry of Health is quite aware of some of the projects before they are approved. Consultation goes on if a project affects Community and Social Services. If the support funds are there, then we can carry out these projects.

If the member asks about the commitment we have, then, as I said, we have a committee inasmuch as Community and Social Services is quite aware of all the projects that are before me and have been approved. This press release indicates those units have been approved; so there are commitments from the ministries to carry out these projects, and support funding is there.

Mrs. Marland: The first part of the minister's answer dealt with the victims of domestic violence. I purposely set that aside today because we did not get very far with it last Thursday. Today, I was asking the minister about the physically disabled, the emotionally disabled, the former psychiatric patients and the former residents of other institutions, including those who would come under the Ministry of Correctional Services.

The minister said through his press release that these other ministries are aware of his 3,000 units; I should say they are our 3,000 units, as we globally as taxpayers of Ontario will be funding these 3,000 units. My emphasis is that it will be of no benefit to those groups to provide those physical units—those housing units—without the support packages.

Can the minister tell me today that he has a commitment of dollars from the Minister of Health, the Minister of Correctional Services and the Minister of Community and Social Services to provide the staff and to provide for the special needs in the support package for those people, along with his own program? The minister said the other ministries are aware of it; I want to know the dollar commitment he has from those three ministers.

Hon. Mr. Curling: I stated that I am working very closely with the other ministers. If the honourable member wants a specific amount of dollars, projects vary from one to the other, and I would not be able to give her a specific sum of money now. However, I am telling her we are committed, as are the Ministry of Community and Social Services and the Ministry of Health. We are working very closely, and I do not think that after any program is approved it will go unsupported because of the support services required from Community and Social Services or from Health.

The member talked about putting aside battered spouses today. I read the list of groups that will be served. That list addresses physically, developmentally and psychiatrically handicapped adults. I thought I mentioned that when I stood up. I did that to address the concerns that

the member expressed previously and also to address the specific area the member addressed today.

Mrs. Marland: Would the minister say that if I were to ask those other three ministers, depending on the client group, whether they are ready within their own budgetary plans to provide the support staff and the total package for their client group as it integrates with the minister's program, I would have an affirmative answer from them? Are they fully agreed?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I thought I had made absolutely clear how closely we worked with each other. It is difficult that in the past this was not the case. I am not making any criticism. I gather that many of the ministries were not working together, so many people have fallen between the cracks.

What the member has identified is a very important point. It is the goal to say that we may have a program, and the Ministry of Housing has come through with certain amounts of capital funding. But if the support service is not there, because no one consulted with the Ministry of Health or the Ministry of Community and Social Services—to carry on this program—so be it.

We have worked very closely, and when the project has been approved, when we say “go,” the member will hear from both ministries, if it requires both, or the one ministry that is involved within that specific program. They are committed to that program, because we work as one government. We work in concert to get the project going, and no one will fall between the cracks.

Mrs. Marland: In fairness, a final comment is that the minister is suggesting that similar programs have never existed before in this province. Fortunately, we have many examples of where we have multiministerial agreements where housing and other needed support services have been provided. If we want to talk about Interim Place, that is a perfect example within my own riding.

As well, we have other programs. Certainly, Peel Non-Profit Housing Corp., with its 2,200-odd units in the region of Peel, has worked very closely with other ministries, particularly in the provision of disabled suites that have worked out very successfully. We have housing for seniors where there are some supervisory programs integrated as part of the accommodation.

It is absolutely unfair—I was going to say “false,” but I understand I would not be allowed to say that—for the minister to suggest these people have not been looked after in the past. It is

simply that their numbers continue to increase and their needs always exist.

My questions were directed at ensuring that their needs continue to be addressed and that remedial help is available to those people who need it most. Generally, they are people who are least able to ask for it themselves.

Mr. Chairman: Does the minister have any response before the member for Prince Edward-Lennox begins?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I have a quick response. I hope I did not give the member the impression that ministries never worked together in the past. This is a special program where the money is solely provincial. I presume most of the programs the member spoke about in the municipal nonprofit sector received federal funding. That sort of co-ordination did not make it as effective as we could have made it. It is now provincial funding. I presume it is much easier to work with everyone and not have to hear from the people from Ottawa on how we should carry on the project.

Mr. Taylor: I am never difficult, as the minister knows.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: Here is a strong proponent of rent controls.

Mr. Taylor: That is the next vote. In any event, in fairness to the minister, he cannot be responsible for all the problems of the province, whether they are housing or whatever. I do not think a government should be responsible for all the housing problems of the province.

Mr. Foulds: Certainly not yours.

Mr. Taylor: Some of us believe there is a market system or a semblance of some free enterprise in Ontario that is going to generate the housing that people need. If he likes, one can accuse the minister of not having enough affordable housing for the weak, the oppressed and the downtrodden. I have heard that today. I have heard that from my colleagues. We have very sensitive colleagues here as well.

Mr. Breagh: Who would make such a wishy-washy argument as that?

1750

Mr. Taylor: I am not going to respond to members of the New Democratic Party who want the minister to be the biggest landlord on the North American continent.

Mr. Breagh: He is, as a matter of fact. Your party made him that.

Mr. Taylor: He is second now. The member's party would make him that. We know that party

would make him that because of its political socialist dogma, which would rather see government be the owner. Talk about state capitalism. I am not going to respond to the member today because he had his turn and we know what he stands for.

I am going to say this to elicit a response from the minister. When it comes to affordable housing—and we can talk about affordable housing for all social strata—we are not just talking about people who are victims of circumstance momentarily or who, on a more permanent basis, are deprived of the type of housing they would like to have. We would all like something better. Members should not think I am not sensitive to the needs of the people in Ontario who are struggling to put a roof over their heads and to try to make ends meet. It is becoming more difficult every day. We all know that.

The minister has not said it, but I do not think he is running a crisis centre in the Ministry of Housing to address the immediate needs that are often addressed at the local level through welfare offices, the Ministry of Community and Social Services and others. There are other programs. The minister has a mandate—and he should correct me if I am wrong—to ensure an environment in Ontario that will be conducive to the development of decent housing for everyone.

It is the minister's contribution to that economic and political environment that is very important. I do not look to the minister for all the answers. I have witnessed the political softshoes and heard about the smoke and mirrors and the charades. Politics is made up of a lot of that.

Mr. Foulds: You are attacking your own colleague.

Mr. Taylor: I am not attacking my own colleague. I never attack a colleague. I am just saying to the minister that there is—

Mr. Foulds: Who said "smoke and mirrors"? Who used the word "charade"? It was the Tory Housing critic.

Mr. Chairman: Order.

Mr. Taylor: I am not going to respond to these interjections. I would be happy to debate with the member in any forum, even in a more rarefied atmosphere than this, if the member wants to some time.

In any event, this is a historical problem in Ontario. We have seen it. There is a lack of affordable housing, and the problem is becoming more critical. It is not that houses are not being built. We have travelled and have seen in my colleague's riding of Mississauga hundreds of

acres of new housing being built. On the weekend, as I travel home to my riding, I see hundreds of acres of new housing going up in the Pickering, Ajax, Whitby and Oshawa areas.

The problem is that the affordable housing is not there. At one time, the head of the family was always looked upon as the breadwinner. We have to have two breadwinners now in a family in order to purchase and finance a home. Homes are going beyond the grasp of the two persons per family who are working and making a contribution.

I put to the minister and seriously request that he respond as best he can in terms of his views or in terms of what he thinks he can do to make housing more affordable. I am talking now about the ordinary man in the street, the little man, the person most of us represent, who is working hard and striving to buy a home, pay off the mortgage, put the rug on the floor, finance the appliances and so on.

It is the input costs in these houses. We have a number of economic factors that come into play, as the minister knows, factors such as mortgage rates and the availability of mortgage money. We have other factors that have played and are playing a bigger role, and those factors now are the whole process: the time frame within which a piece of land can be subdivided, serviced and put on the market—that whole area.

We reviewed the Planning Act. As the minister knows, it probably took the better part of a decade to review and revise the Planning Act. The new Planning Act came out in 1983. It was passed by this House. I wonder whether the minister has some views about some way of streamlining the process so that the lead times in putting serviced land on the market can be shorter, and whether he has looked at the conditions that are imposed at all levels of government; in other words, the process itself. In terms of such things as imposts, it is all right for municipalities to argue that they need so many thousands of dollars per lot. I do not know what it is now; I have heard astronomical sums. At one time I was closer to this type of thing.

When we look at all of those costs being factored into the price of a home and then financed by a mortgage, it takes a couple, two earners in a family earning very high salaries, in order to carry that home. I put the question to the minister about whether he will pursue or has been pursuing that area.

There are other factors. We have very high input costs for materials. Has he pursued the input costs? The object of the exercise, of course,

is to try to cut down all of the input costs into housing so that the finished product can be marketed at a much more reasonable sum so that the general population can afford to buy that home.

I know the Treasurer and government House leader is anxious to announce what the order of business will be for tomorrow. If is appropriate, I will stand down now.

Hon. Mr. Curling: Very briefly, the honourable member knows, as he went around the province with me, that we looked into all those aspects of trying to get affordable housing to all the people of Ontario. It is a very difficult task. I think that in a short time we did well enough to come up with a policy in Bill 51 that addresses that concern. We are quite mindful of those factors that affect the high cost of bringing affordable housing to the people of Ontario.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Mr. Chairman, just before moving that the committee rise, may I check with you, sir, my understanding that this would complete the Housing estimates after 23.5 hours of continuous discussion and that it is generally agreed by any reasonable participant that we have had enough?

Mr. Chairman: Actually, it is not quite 12 hours, approximately, but I had no indication from the committee that it wished to wrap it up today. What is the committee's wish?

Mr. Gordon: Mr. Chairman, I have two members who wish to speak further on this matter; but given the kind of discussion we have had to date, if it is the wish of the majority of the members in this House that we finish these estimates now, I guess we can do so.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the views expressed by the member for Sudbury as the principal Housing critic for the official opposition. With that in mind, I move that the committee rise and report. No; I ask the members to wait a minute. We have a minute to carry these votes.

Mr. Breaugh: Mr. Chairman, the minister should move the votes before we rise and report. That would be helpful if we want to end the estimates.

Mr. Chairman: I am advised that this was the agreement. We have carried up to vote 1904.

Vote 1904 agreed to.

Vote 1905 agreed to.

On motion by Hon. Mr. Nixon, the committee of supply reported certain resolutions.

The House adjourned at 6:02 p.m.

APPENDIX

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS IN ORDERS AND NOTICES

COMMISSION ON THE FINANCING OF
ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY
EDUCATION

511. Mr. Allen: Would the Minister of Education provide the total cost and a detailed breakdown of the Macdonald Commission on the Financing of Elementary and Secondary Education in Ontario, including fees and per diem expenses paid to the commissioners, salaries of support staff, printing costs, the names of consultants with contract amounts and terms of reference and all hotel and hospitality costs incurred by the commission? [Tabled November 24, 1986]

Hon. Mr. Conway: Cost of Commission on the Financing of Elementary and Secondary Education:

Salaries, \$367,913; benefits, \$43,472.

Transportation and communications—hotels, hospitality, travel, \$76,588; other expenditure in this category, \$8,790; total, \$85,378.

Services—contracts, D. Auld, \$10,500; P. Atherton, \$5,000; Currie, Coopers and Lybrand Ltd., \$14,900; D. Stager, \$5,000; subtotal, \$35,400; per diems paid to commissioners, \$132,875; communication services, including advertising, \$61,595; receptions and catering, \$21,048; rental services, buildings, \$138,059; other expenditure in this category, \$55,796; total, \$444,773.

Supplies and equipment—data processing equipment and supplies, \$27,871; printing, \$30,370; other expenditure in this category, \$15,774; total, \$74,015.

Total cost, \$1,015,551.

D. Auld—Terms of reference of contract: (1) identify alternative funding mechanisms, other than the current funding plan, to finance public sector elementary and secondary education in Ontario; (2) identify and describe the strengths and weaknesses of each approach; (3) delineate possible consequences identified in item 1; (4) produce an outline of a paper to be written that incorporates the elements identified in items 1 through 3.

Period of contract: January 8, 1985, to April 5, 1985. Amount of contract: \$5,000.

D. Auld—Terms of reference of contract: (1) examine the issue of wealth neutrality in public education in Ontario; (2) determine the extent to

which assessment and income are related as measures of ability to pay; (3) test the relationship between expenditures and grants including an examination of expenditures beyond the recognized ceilings; (4) examine the effect which the nonresidential-residential assessment mix has on per pupil expenditures; (5) produce an outline of a paper to be written that incorporates the elements identified in items 1 through 5.

Period of contract: May 28, 1985, to August 30, 1985. Amount of contract: \$5,500.

P. A. Atherton—Terms of reference of contract: (1) identify critical issues in educational financing (elementary and secondary public sector education) in Ontario and also in other jurisdictions in Canada and the United States in the 1980s and beyond; (2) discuss the issues identified in item 1 above; (3) outline solutions to the issues; (4) delineate the consequences resulting from the possible adoption of the solutions; (5) produce an outline of a paper to be written that incorporates the elements identified in items 1 through 4.

Period of contract: December 10, 1984, to March 1, 1985. Amount of contract: \$5,000.

Currie, Coopers and Lybrand Ltd. (P. Hossack)—Terms of reference of contract: (1) identify and describe the cost-benefit elements, both direct and indirect, and issues, both one-time and ongoing, of the new information technology (NIT); (2) delineate some potential strategies that the government could adopt and outline their financial implications; (3) produce an outline of a paper to be written that incorporates the elements identified in items 1 and 2.

Period of contract: February 22, 1985, to May 31, 1985. Amount of contract: \$14,900.

D. Stager—Terms of reference of contract: (1) Conduct a search of the literature to identify and describe trends and factors in economics, demographics, politics and other social factors in Ontario; (2) describe how these factors could impact on public sector education in Ontario in the foreseeable future; (3) delineate some of the consequences of impact of the factors described in item 2 and estimate possible directions of public sector education; (4) produce an outline of a paper to be written that incorporates the elements identified in items 1 through 3.

Period of contract: November 29, 1984, to March 1, 1985. Amount of contract: \$5,000.

HOME OWNER EMPLOYEE RELOCATION PLAN

512. Mr. Runciman: Will the Minister of Education indicate how much money Frank DiNoble received under the home owner employee relocation plan when the ministry purchased Mr. DiNoble's home in Prescott? Will the minister indicate when Mr. DiNoble purchased his Prescott home and how much he paid for it? Did the ministry also purchase Mr. DiNoble's Ottawa home; if yes, at what price? How many transactions occur annually under the home owner employee relocation plan? During fiscal year 1986, how much money has been expended under this program? What is your estimate for total year-end costs of this program? [Tabled November 25, 1986]

Hon. Mr. Conway: Mr. DiNoble received \$177,000 as the guaranteed purchase price under the plan from the ministry. Mr. DiNoble purchased his Prescott home in May 1985 for \$150,000. The ministry did not purchase Mr. DiNoble's Ottawa home.

An average of three transactions occur per year (two only so far this year).

Fiscal year 1986-87 expenditures to the end of November 1986 under the program, \$51,155.44.

Total costs for year ending March 31, 1987,

\$51,155.44, as above, since all transactions under the plan have been completed to date and all expenditures have been made. There are no further expenditures anticipated in this fiscal year.

HELP CENTRES

518. Mr. Jackson: Would the Minister of Skills Development provide details of all visits he has made to unemployed older workers' help centres since becoming minister; specifically, the centres visited, the dates of any such visits and the amount of time spent there? [Tabled December 1, 1986]

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: During the period of June 26, 1985, to December 1, 1986, I have met with the organizers of two centres sponsored under the Ontario help centres program in St. Catharines and Brantford. I have not personally visited any such centre.

527. Mr. Jackson: Would the Minister of Skills Development provide the dates final contracts for 1986 were sent to each of the older workers' help centres and when they were returned? [Tabled December 9, 1986]

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: The dates that contracts for the 1986-87 fiscal year were sent to centres sponsored under the Ontario help centres program, along with the dates that they were returned, are detailed in the following chart.

Centre	Date contract mailed to centre	Date contract returned
Brampton Labour and Community Services	Sept. 25/86	*
Brantford and District Unemployed Service Centre	Sept. 25/86	*
Cambridge and District Unemployed Help Centre	Sept. 25/86	Nov. 10/86
Guelph Centre for Employable Workers	Sept. 25/86	*
Hamilton-Wentworth Help Centre	Sept. 25/86	*
Kitchener-The Working Centre	Sept. 25/86	Oct. 24/86
London Unemployed Help Centre	Sept. 25/86	Oct. 22/86
Mississauga (Malton) Labour and Community Services	Sept. 25/86	*
Niagara Falls Unemployed Help Centre	Sept. 25/86	Nov. 10/86
Oshawa and District Unemployed Help Centre	Sept. 25/86	Nov. 18/86

Centre	Date contract mailed to centre	Date contract returned
Peterborough—The Unemployed Assistance Centre	Interim funding sent, pending indication of local funds raised.	
St. Catharines Unemployed Help Centre	Sept. 25/86	*
St. Thomas-Elgin Unemployed Help Centre	Sept. 25/86	*
Sault Ste. Marie Unemployed Workers Council Help Centre	Dec. 12/86	*
Toronto—Downtown Employment Services	Sept. 25/86	Sept. 30/86
Unemployed Help Centre of Windsor	Sept. 25/86	Oct. 22/86
York Help Centre	Sept. 25/86	Oct. 23/86
York Region Help Centre	Sept. 25/86	Oct. 23/86

*Not returned as of December 9, 1986.

528. Mr. Jackson: Would the Minister of Skills Development provide the amount of funds provided to each older workers' help centre from the ministry since January 1, 1986, the date and amount of each disbursement and the arrangements for the disbursement of funds from the ministry to the centres as set out in each contract and any correspondence authorizing changes to the contract disbursements? [Tabled December 9, 1986]

my ministry under the Ontario help centres program during the period of January 1, 1986, to December 9, 1986, and the payment dates are listed on the attached chart.

The arrangements for the payment of funds under the Ontario help centres program are specified in sections 14, 15, and 16 of the program contract. A copy of these sections is attached.

There is no correspondence authorizing changes to the contract disbursements.

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: The payments made by

**Payments and pay dates to help centres
January 1, 1986, to December 9, 1986:**

Centre	Payment date 1986	Amount
Brampton Labour and Community Services	Jan. 16	\$ 8,800
	Feb. 17	10,000
	April 9	6,250
	May 28	6,000
	June 23	17,750
	July 7	22,500
	Aug. 19	17,500
Brantford and District Unemployed Service Centre	April 9	\$ 2,500
	May 8	7,000
	July 7	10,000
	Aug. 7	20,000
	Dec. 3	15,000

Centre	Payment date 1986	Amount
Cambridge and District Unemployed Help Centre	March 25	\$29,696
	June 6	5,000
	Aug. 7	15,000
	Sept. 19	15,000
	Dec. 5	5,000
Guelph Centre for Employable Workers	Aug. 6	\$16,183
	Sept. 19	15,000
	Dec. 5	5,000
Hamilton-Wentworth Help Centre	April 3	\$ 5,000
	April 9	6,250
	May 20	6,000
	June 23	17,750
	Aug. 6	25,000
	Sept. 19	15,000
Kitchener—The Working Centre	Jan. 2	\$30,000
	Jan. 29	25,000
	Feb. 25	15,000
	April 9	5,500
	May 8	9,000
	June 2	37,500
	Aug. 6	20,000
	Sept. 19	8,000
London Unemployed Help Centre	March 27	\$16,970
	May 9	10,000
	June 26	4,000
	Aug. 6	9,000
	Nov. 20	2,456
Mississauga (Malton) Labour and Community Services	Aug. 26	\$26,800
	Dec. 5	4,500
Niagara Falls Unemployed Help Centre	April 3	\$ 6,000
	June 2	10,800
	Aug. 6	15,000
	Sept. 18	10,200
Oshawa and District Unemployed Help Centre	June 26	\$27,048
	Aug. 6	15,000
	Sept. 19	15,000
	Dec. 5	6,000
Peterborough—The Unemployed Assistance Centre	Feb. 4	\$15,000
	March 31	9,000
	April 8	6,250
	May 14	6,000
	June 22	5,817
	July 17	30,000
	Oct. 10	10,000
	Nov. 14	3,650

Centre	Payment date 1986	Amount
St. Catharines Unemployed Help Centre	Feb. 17	\$20,000
	March 21	12,000
	May 9	4,500
	Aug. 7	30,000
	Sept. 10	10,000
	Sept. 19	10,000
St. Thomas-Elgin Unemployed Help Centre	April 9	\$ 4,000
	May 9	6,000
	June 24	12,000
	Aug. 7	20,000
	Sept. 19	8,000
Sault Ste. Marie Unemployed Workers Council Help Centre	June 18	\$13,244
	Sept. 19	10,000
	Dec. 5	6,500
Toronto-Downtown Employment Services	Aug. 7	\$26,020
Unemployed Help Centre of Windsor	Feb. 17	\$10,000
	March 24	4,000
	April 9	6,000
	May 9	7,000
	June 23	17,000
	Aug. 6	30,000
	Sept. 19	10,000
York Help Centre	Sept. 10	\$30,000
York Region Help Centre	June 24	\$30,000
	Aug. 7	22,500
	Sept. 19	15,000

Program contract sections 14, 15, 16

14. Payment of Ontario's contribution shall be made on the following basis:

(a) interim funds paid to a centre between July 1 and September 30, 1985, shall be considered as part of Ontario's total program contribution;

(b) initial advances not exceeding 40 per cent of Ontario's contribution in respect to the centre's operating costs will be payable to the project sponsor at the time of approval;

(c) for the balance of the project, matching payments shall be made quarterly in an amount estimated by Ontario in respect to a centre's operating costs, such quarterly advances being payable only after the project sponsor has submitted a monthly accounting with respect to the previous advances whether initial or quarterly; and

(d) Ontario may withhold payment of a sum not exceeding 10 per cent of the agreement value payable following approval by Ontario of a final progress report and financial statement, or if considered necessary by Ontario following completion of an audit by representatives of Ontario.

15. Notwithstanding clause 16 Ontario may withhold payment of any amount payable pursuant hereto:

(a) where the project sponsor has failed to comply with any covenant or undertaking contained herein;

(b) where it is not satisfied with the progress of the project; or

(c) pending the outcome of an audit being done on the project.

16. In the event payments made to the project sponsor by Ontario exceed the amounts to which

the project sponsor is properly entitled pursuant hereto, the amount of such excess shall be payable forthwith to Ontario upon receipt of notice thereof and such amount shall be deemed as being a debt due to Ontario.

INTERIM ANSWERS

380. Mr. McLean: Hon. Mr. Fulton—Additional time is required to obtain and assemble the data from all ministries. An answer should be available on or about February 27, 1987.

519. Mr. Jackson: Hon. Mr. Sorbara—Additional information is being prepared and a response will be available on or about February 6, 1987.

RESPONSE TO PETITION

SUNDAY TRADING

Sessional paper 268, re Sunday and holiday retailing.

Hon. Mr. Keyes: The government appreciated receiving the views of 108,892 Ontario citizens who oppose any changes in the Retail Business Holidays Act that would permit additional stores to open on Sundays and other holidays.

The legislation has been conclusively upheld as constitutional and valid by the decision of the Supreme Court of Canada on December 18, 1986. The prosecution of outstanding charges can now proceed. Also, police forces have been advised to continue to enforce the law and lay charges when violations occur.

Since the legislation involves widespread social and economic issues that affect people throughout the entire province, a select committee of the Legislative Assembly is being established to review the law and receive the views of members of the public.

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SPEAKERS IN THIS ISSUE

Allen, R. (Hamilton West NDP)
Andrewes, P. W. (Lincoln PC)
Bradley, Hon. J. J., Minister of the Environment (St. Catharines L)
Brandt, A. S. (Sarnia PC)
Breaugh, M. J. (Oshawa NDP)
Conway, Hon. S. G., Minister of Education and acting Minister of Government Services (Renfrew North L)
Cooke, D. S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)
Cousens, W. D. (York Centre PC)
Curling, Hon. A., Minister of Housing (Scarborough North L)
Davis, W. C. (Scarborough Centre PC)
Edighoffer, Hon. H. A., Speaker (Perth L)
Elston, Hon. M. J., Minister of Health (Huron-Bruce L)
Foulds, J. F. (Port Arthur NDP)
Gigantes, E. (Ottawa Centre NDP)
Gillies, P. A. (Brantford PC)
Gordon, J. K. (Sudbury PC)
Gregory, M. E. C. (Mississauga East PC)
Johnson, J. M. (Wellington-Dufferin-Peel PC)
Johnston, R. F. (Scarborough West NDP)
Keyes, Hon. K. A., Solicitor General and Minister of Correctional Services (Kingston and the Islands L)
Kwinter, Hon. M., Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations and Minister of Financial Institutions (Wilson Heights L)
Marland, M. (Mississauga South PC)
McClellan, R. A. (Bellwoods NDP)
McFadden, D. J. (Eglinton PC)
Morin, G. E., Deputy Chairman of the Committees of the Whole House and Acting Speaker (Carleton East L)
Nixon, Hon. R. F., Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Economics, Minister of Revenue and acting Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet (Brant-Oxford-Norfolk L)
Philip, E. T. (Etobicoke NDP)
Pierce, F. J. (Rainy River PC)
Rae, R. K. (York South NDP)
Rowe, W. E. (Simcoe Centre PC)
Scott, Hon. I. G., Attorney General (St. David L)
Sterling, N. W. (Carleton-Grenville PC)
Swart, M. L. (Welland-Thorold NDP)
Sweeney, Hon. J., Minister of Community and Social Services (Kitchener-Wilmot L)
Taylor, J. A. (Prince Edward-Lennox PC)
Treleaven, R. L., Deputy Speaker and Chairman of the Committees of the Whole House (Oxford PC)
Villeneuve, N. (Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry PC)
Wildman, B. (Algoma NDP)

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